Sunland Park Comprehensive Community Assessment

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INTRODUCTION

Sunland Park
Comprehensive Community Assessment
Social Work Program
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The intention of the Social Work Program at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), during the spring semester of 2005, was to produce a comprehensive community assessment that would focus specifically on the needs and concerns of youth and their families. To complete this project, the UTEP Social Work Program worked with the Child and Family Development Department of the City of Sunland Park and the Juvenile Justice Division of the Children, Youth, and Families Department in the State of New Mexico. Several issues were addressed in this endeavor. The assessment conducted by students and the current Director of the UTEP Social Work Program will be the first step in identifying the needs of youth, services directed toward youth, and those supportive and negative environmental factors that impact youth in the city of Sunland Park, New Mexico.

This assessment will provide the following information for those Sunland Park agencies serving youth and families within this southernmost incorporated community of Dona Ana County in New Mexico:

1. Baseline data regarding youth services and the degree to which providers meet the needs of the youth and families of Sunland Park.
2. Information related to gangs, gang activities, existing gang territories, and efforts, both state and local, directed toward gang intervention/prevention.
3. A comprehensive view of the community that will allow program planners to develop youth services that address the needs and concerns of youth within the context of the community, as a whole.
4. Valuable information related to cultural, social, and environmental aspects of Sunland Park that will serve to inform and guide policies related to youth services development in a manner that is culturally appropriate.

In addition, the comprehensive nature of this assessment will be of use to the various city departments in Sunland Park that are involved in grant writing and program planning.

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The city of Sunland Park, New Mexico is considered a small, but vast incorporated community in Dona Ana County in southern New Mexico. Sunland Park is the southernmost city in Dona Ana County, west of El Paso, Texas, and north of Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. This city has a strategic location as it is on the border with two countries, Mexico and the United States, and three states, New Mexico, Texas, and Chihuahua, all of which are important influences. Currently, Sunland Park in Dona Ana County is one of the fastest growing areas in the state of New Mexico.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The demographic profile will include information and comparison statistics of Sunland Park, along with Dona Ana County, the State of New Mexico, and the United States. Information gathered was collected from the 2000 US Census, along with the Child and Family Development Department and the Sunland Park City Library, where research and personal interviews were conducted throughout spring 2006. The demographic profile will include information on: 1) age and gender, 2) race and ethnicity, 3) citizenship and place of birth, 4) major language(s) spoken, 5) household by type, 6) housing units, 7) poverty, 8) income, 9) employment, 10) education, 11) domestic and family violence, and 12) crimes committed by minors.

Age and Gender

The total population for the community of Sunland Park is 13,309 (2000, US Census) and the estimated 2003 population is 13,815 (2003, US Census Bureau). According to Assistant Branch Librarian Dextor Katzman (personal communication, February 16, 2005), he indicated that since the 2000 Census the population had most likely increased to approximately 17,000. Since the 1990 US Census and 2000 US Census, Sunland Park had a population growth of 62.7%, which has made Sunland Park the fastest growing community along the border. Sunland Park is also considered a community of young people, with a median age of 25.4 years, as compared to Dona Ana County with a median age of 30.2 years, New Mexico at 34.6 years, and the United States at 35.3 years (US Census, 2000). Residents under the age of 24 years is 6,568 or 49.3%; of which 1,311 or 9.9% are children under the age of 5 years, 1,408 or 10.6% are children ages 5 to 9 years, 1,389 or 10.4% are children ages 10 to 14 years, 1,389 or 10.4% are

children ages 15 to 19 years, and 1,071 or 8% are children ages 20 to 24 years (US Census, 2000).

Seniors, 65 years and over, total 1,002 or 7.5% of the population; of which 692 or 5.2% are ages 65 to 74 years, 257 or 1.9% are ages 75 to 84 years, and 53 or 0.4% are ages 85 and over (2000, US Census). In comparison, seniors 65 years and over represent 10.6% of the population in Dona Ana County, 11.7% in New Mexico, and 12.4% in the United States (2000, US Census).

The number and percentages of the remaining age groups for Sunland Park are as follows; 1,770 or 13.3% for ages 25 to 34 years, 1,754 or 13.2% for ages 35 to 44 years, 1,387 or 10.4% for ages 45 to 54 years, 423 or 3.2% for ages 55 to 59 years, 405 or 3% for ages 60 to 64 years (2000, US Census).

According to the 2000 US Census, of the total population of 13,309 in Sunland Park, females comprise 6,879 or 51.7% and males comprise 6,430 or 48.3%, which are in line with county, state, and national figures. Sunland Park residents 18 years and over number 8,324 or 62.5% of the total population; of which 4,419 or 33.2% are female and 3,905 or 29.3% are male; while in the county females represent 36.3% and males 34% (US Census, 2000). In the state females represent 37.1% and males 34.9% of the total population, and nationally females represent 38.4% and males 35.9% of the total population (US Census, 2000). Sunland Park residents 65 years and over number 1,002 or 7.5% of the total population; of which 512 or 3.8% are female and 490 or 3.7% are male; while in the county females represent 5.7% and males 4.9% of the total population (US Census, 2000). In the state females represent 6.5% and males 5.1% of the total population, and nationally females represent 7.3% and males 5.1% of the total population (US Census, 2000).

Race and Ethnicity

According to the 2000 US Census, the city of Sunland Park has a Hispanic or Latino population of 12,835 or 96.4% of the total population; of which 11,009 or 82.7% are Mexican, 11 or 0.1% are Puerto Rican, one is Cuban, and 1,814 or 13.6% are other Hispanic or Latino race. Non-Hispanic or Latino represent 474 or 3.6% of the total population; of which 381 or 2.9% of the total population is White Non-Hispanic (US Census, 2000). In comparison, in Dona Ana County 32.5% of the total population is

White-non-Hispanic and 63.4% of the total population is Hispanic or Latino; of which 45% consider themselves Mexican, in New Mexico 44.7% of the total population is White non-Hispanic and 42.1% of the total population is Hispanic or Latino; of which 18.1% consider themselves Mexican, and in the United States 69.1% of the total population is White non-Hispanic and 12.5% of the total population is Hispanic or Latino; of which 7.3% consider themselves Mexican (US Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 US Census, 367 or 2.8% of the total population consider themselves to be two or more races. In comparison to those who consider themselves to be one race are 12,942 or 97.2% of the total population; of which 9,290 or 69.8% are White, 108 or 0.8% are American Indian and Alaska Native, 71 or 0.5% are Black or African American, 9 or 0.1% are Asian, while 3,463 or 26% are some other race (US Census, 2000).

In race alone or in combination with one or more other races, the 2000 US Census reports 9,638 or 72.4% of the total population are White, 126 or 0.9% are American Indian and Alaska Native, 95 or 0.7% are Black or African American, 21 or 0.2% are Asian, 7 or 0.1% are Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, while 3,799 or 28.5% are some other race.

Citizenship and Place of Birth

Under this category the 2000 US Census shows a total population of 13,318 for Sunland Park; of which 7,615 or 57.2% are native born and 5,703 or 42.8% are foreign born. Of the total native born population, 7,432 or 55.8% residents were born in the United States; of which 5,698 or 42.8% of residents were born in a different state and 1,734 or 13% of residents were born in the state of residence (New Mexico); while 183 or 1.4% of residents were born outside the United States (US Census, 2000). In Dona Ana County 81.3% of the total population are native born. In New Mexico 91.8% of the total population are native born and in the United States 88.9% of the total population are native born (US Census, 2000).

Of the total foreign born population, 3,969 or 29.8% of residents are not a citizen and 1,734 or 13% of residents are naturalized citizens (US Census, 2000). In the county 18.7% of the total population are foreign born, in the state 8.2% of the total population

are foreign born, and nationally 11.1% of the total population is foreign born (US Census, 2000).

Major Language(s) Spoken

Mexicans and Mexican Americans are the most prevalent ethnic group in the community of Sunland Park and, therefore, Spanish is the dominant language in the community and home. According to the 2000 US Census, of the 12,022 total residents ages 5 years and over 860 or 7.2% of residents speak English only at home, while 11,162 or 92.8% of residents speak a language (Spanish) other than English at home; of which 4,797 or 43% speak English "very well," 2,413 or 21.7% speak English "well," 2,240 or 20.1% speak English "not well," and 1,695 or 15.2% speak English "not at all" (US Census, 2000). Of the 12,022 total residents 5 years and over 6,353 or 52.8% speak English "less than very well;" of which 1,537 or 12.8% are ages 5 to 17 years, 4,010 or 33.4% are ages 18 to 64 years, and 806 or 6.7% are 65 years and over (US Census, 2000).

According to the US Census Bureau, "a linguistically isolated household is one in which no member 14 years old and over (1) speaks only English or (2) speaks a non-English language and speaks English "very well." In other words, all members 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with English." In Sunland Park, there are 1,087 linguistically isolated households and of the total population 5 years and over, 3,227 or 26.9% live in linguistically isolated households; of which 942 or 7.9% are ages 5 to 17 years, 1,788 or 14.8% are ages 18 to 64 years, and 517 or 4.3% are 65 years and over (US Census, 2000).

Household by Type

The 2000 US Census reports 3,355 total households in Sunland Park; of which 2,968 or 88.5% are family households, with 1,850 or 55.1% with own children under 18 years. Of the 2,968 total family households, 2,112 or 63% are married-couple family, with 1,330 or 39.6% with own children under 18 years and 697 or 20.8% are female householders, with no husband present, with 438 or 13.1% with own children under 18 years (U.S Census, 2000). Dona Ana County 72.1% are family households; of which 52.4% are married-couple family and 14.7% are female householder, with no husband present (US Census, 2000). In New Mexico, 68.8% are family households; of which 50.4% are married-couple family and 13.2% are female householder, with no husband

present (US Census, 2000). Nationally, 68.1% are family households; of which 51.7% are married-couple family and 12.2% are female householder, with no husband present (US Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 US Census there are 387 or 11.5% non-family households; of which 331 or 9.9% are householder living alone and 131 or 3.9% are householder 65 years and over. In comparison, Sunland Park's non-family household figure is much lower than the county, state, and national non-family household figures of 27.9%, 31.2%, and 31.9%, respectively. The average household size is 3.95 and the average family size is 4.24 (US Census, 2000). In comparison, the county's average household size is 2.85 and the average family size is 3.36; the state's average household size is 2.63 and the average family size is 3.18; and nationally the average household size is 2.59 and the average family size is 3.14 (US Census, 2000).

Housing Units

According to the US Census Bureau, a housing unit is "a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other individuals in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall. For vacant units, the criteria of separateness and direct access are applied to the intended occupants whenever possible."

Sunland Park has 3,617 total housing units; of which 3,355 or 92.8% are occupied housing units (US Census, 2000). Owner-occupied housing units total 2,301 or 68.6% and renter-occupied housing units, including government and institutional housing, as well as private rental property, total 1,054 or 31.4% (U.S Census, 2000). This is relatively no different than the county figures of 91.3% occupied housing units; of which 67.5% are owner-occupied and 32.5% are renter-occupied, state figures of 86.9% occupied housing units; of which 70% are owner-occupied and 30% are renter-occupied, and national figures of 91% occupied housing units; of which 66.2% are owner-occupied and 33.8% are renter-occupied (US Census, 2000).

According to Tommy Garcia, Building Inspector from the Community Development Department, Sunland Park has many different types of housing units; which

include mobile homes, on-site manufactured homes, off-site manufactured homes, on-site built homes, and combinations of on-site built homes and mobile homes (Personal Communication, April 2005). According to the 2000 US Census, the current assessed median value for homes in Sunland Park is $58,700; which pales in comparison to the median value for a home in Dona Ana County of $90,900, New Mexico of $108,100, and the United States of $119,600. Sunland Park has a population density of 1,260.6 per square mile and a housing unit density of 342.6 per square mile (US Census, 2000).

Poverty

According to the 2000 US Census, in Sunland Park there are 1,062 or 36.3% families below poverty level, 892 or 41.3% families, with related children under 18 years below poverty level, and 464 or 47.2% families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level. In comparison, Dona Ana County has 20.3% families, 28.9% families, with related children under 18 years, and 35.6% families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level; while New Mexico has 14% families, 20.8% families, with related children under 18 years, and 26.4% families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level; and in the United States there are 9.2% families, 13.6% families, with related children under 18 years, and 17% families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level (US Census, 2000).

The 2000 US Census states that of the 2,138 total married-couple families in Sunland Park at all income levels, 711 or 33.3% live below poverty level. There are 1,536 married-couple families with related children under 18 years; of which 568 or 37% are married-couple families with related children under 18 years below poverty level, and there are 694 married-couple families with related children under 5 years; of which 277 or 39.9% are married-couple families with related children under 5 years below poverty level.

According to the 2000 US Census, in Sunland Park there are 306 or 47.6% female householder families, with no husband present below poverty level, 291 or 54.2% female householder families, with related children under 18 years below poverty level, and 163 or 72.1% female householder families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level. In comparing the families with female householder, with no husband present, Dona Ana County has 42% female householder families, 50.1% female householder families,

with related children under 18 years, and 63.4% female householder families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level; while New Mexico has 34.1% female householder families, 41.6% female householder families, with related children under 18 years, and 54.3% female householder families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level; and in the United States 26.5% female householder families, 34.3% female householder families, with related children under 18 years, and 46.4% female householder families, with related children under 5 years below poverty level (US Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 US Census, in Sunland Park 5,166 or 39% individuals live below poverty level, 2,903 or 34.8% individuals, 18 years and over live below poverty, 381 or 34.6% individuals, 65 years and over live below poverty, and 2,263 or 46.2% individuals, with related children under 18 years live below poverty level. In comparison, the county has 25.4% individuals, 21.4% individuals, 18 years and over, 12.7% individuals, 65 years and over, and 34.4% individuals, with related children under 18 years living below poverty level; the state has 18% individuals, 15.9% individuals, 18 years and over, 12.8% individuals, 65 years and over, and 24.6% individuals, with related children under 18 years living below poverty level; and nationally 12.4% individuals, 10.9% individuals, 18 years and over, 9.9% individuals, 65 years and over, and 16.% individuals, with related children under 18 years living below poverty level (US Census, 2000).

Income

According to 2000 US Census, Sunland Park has a per capita income of $6,576; while in comparison the county has a per capita income of $13,999, the state has a per capita income of $17,261, and nationally the per capita income is $21,587.

The city of Sunland Park has a median family income of $21,255; while the county has a median family income of $33,576, the state has a median family income of $39,425, and nationally the median family income is $50,046 (US Census, 2000). Sunland Park has a median household income of $20,164; while the county's median household income is $29,808, the state's median household income is $34,133, and nationally the median household income is $41,994 (US Census, 2000). According to the 2000 US Census, the Sunland Park has a mean retirement income of $8,900; which is less

than half of the county, state, and national figures of $18,176, $18,539, and $17,376, respectively.

Of the 13,309 residents living in Sunland Park, the total population 16 years and over is 8,884; of which 4,353 or 49% is in the labor force and 4,531 or 51% is not in the labor force (US Census, 2000). There are two types of labor forces; civilian and Armed Forces. Of those in the civilian labor force, 3,788 or 42.6% are employed and 559 or 6.3% are unemployed (U.S. Census, 2000). In comparison, Dona Ana County has 5.4% civilian labor force unemployed, New Mexico has 4.4% civilian labor force unemployed, and the United States has 3.7% civilian labor force unemployed (US Census, 2000).

Employment

Sunland Park is a "bedroom community," meaning that the majority of working residents leave the community each day for employment in other places, such as El Paso, Texas or Las Cruces, New Mexico, and return at night. This is due to the limited employment opportunities available in the Sunland Park area. Although, many Sunland Park businesses employ Sunland Park residents, not all businesses follow this hiring practice. According to the 2000 US Census, of the workers 16 years and over 2,668 or 72% drove alone to work, 645 or 17.4% carpooled, 86 or 2.3% took public transportation, and 117 or 3.2% walked to work; while the mean travel time to work was 24.8 minutes.

As a recent 2004 Community Development Department report stated, data on employment for Sunland Park indicated that there are 294 businesses registered with the city of Sunland Park; of which several businesses are owned by outside companies located in El Paso, Texas; Las Cruces, New Mexico; and Phoenix, Arizona; and the top five local businesses in the Sunland Park area are:

	Business	Number of Employees
1.	Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino	600
2.	Prepared Food (frozen & fresh products)	450
3.	The Pointe, R.T.C. (Residential Treatment Center)	180
4.	The Peak, R.T.C. (Residential Treatment Center)	88
5.	Mustang Inc. (plumbing contractors)	69

In the 2000 Community Development Business Registration List, local and non-governmental businesses employed between 995 and 1015 persons. According to the

2004 Community Development Department figures, Sunland Park businesses now employ 1485 employees for a 32% increase in the number of persons employed.

Education

According to the 2000 US Census, Sunland Park's total population 25 years and over is 6,713; of which 3,204 or 47.7% have less than a 9th grade education and 1,124 or 16.7% have between 9th and 12th grade, no diploma, and 1,341 or 20% are high school graduates (including equivalency). In comparing the total population 25 years and over, Dona Ana County's figures show 18.2% have less than a 9th grade education, 11.7% have between 9th and 12th grade, no diploma, and 22.4% are high school graduates (including equivalency); New Mexico figures show 9.3% of the total population have less than a 9th grade education, 11.9% have between 9th and 12th grade, no diploma, and 26.6% are a high school graduate (including equivalency); and the United States figures show 7.5% have less than a 9th grade education, 12.1% have between 9th and 12th grade, no diploma, and 28.6% are a high school graduate (including equivalency) (US Census, 2000).

The 2000 US Census reports of Sunland Park's total population 25 years and over 759 or 11.3% have some college, no degree, 90 or 1.3% have an Associate Degree, 160 or 2.4% have a Bachelor's Degree, and 35 or 0.5% have a Graduate or professional degree. Therefore, of Sunland Park's total population 25 years and over 1,044 or 15.5% have received post secondary education. This is in contrast to county, state, and national figures showing that of the total population 25 years and over, 47.6%, 52.2%, and 51.7%, respectively, have received post secondary education (US Census, 2000).

Domestic and Family Violence

Domestic violence is commonly viewed as the act of physical violence or threat of one family member toward another; including psychological abuse and behaviors that force an individual to partake in unwanted activities and preventing them from carrying on with daily activities. The National Center for Victims of Crime states that in 2003, 10% of domestic violence crimes were committed by the victim's intimate partner and approximately 19% of women were victimized by their intimate partners; while 3% of men were victimized. In 2003, 9% of murder victims were killed by their spouse or intimate partner; of which 79% percent of the victims were women. National statistics reported by United Way of Central New Mexico states that, "domestic violence is the

leading cause of injury to women between the ages of fifteen and forty four." The United Way also noted that victims and abusers transcend the barriers of social, economic class, race, religious beliefs and sexual orientation. The reporting of domestic violence rates to law enforcement were approximately 50% for violent victimizations and 37% for property victimizations (National Center for Victims of Crime, 2005).

Compared to national statistics, the United Way of Central New Mexico (2003) reports intimate partner violence is responsible for approximately half of female homicide deaths and a substantial proportion of nonfatal injuries. Domestic violence by an intimate partner affects all racial and ethnic groups, but fatal intimate partner violence rates are higher among American Indian women in New Mexico (4.9 per 100,000) than among Anglo (1.8) or Hispanic (1.7) women (United Way of Central New Mexico, 2003).

The following research material was provided by La Casa a 24-hour domestic violence hotline and shelter in New Mexico. Under the Crimes Against Household Members Act, any household member may be charged with domestic abuse if there has been an assault or a battery. La Casa statistics report that 48% of incidents of domestic violence were not reported to police. According to the 2003 Domestic Violence Statistics of New Mexico, 25,644 cases of domestic violence were reported to law enforcement; a rate of 14.7 domestic violence incidents per 1000 persons and an average of 15.3 per 1000 over the last three years from 2001 to 2003. As reported by law enforcement, 75% of the victims are female. The victims reported by law enforcement agencies were predominately between the ages of 26 to 35 years and 44% were Hispanic.

According to local Sunland Park Crime reports, the number of cases per month on domestic violence does not vary significantly and ranges from 17 to 24 reported cases per month. According to Elizabeth Gamez, Sunland Park Police Dispatcher, reports of abuse are usually called in while the abuse is in progress and are usually placed by a minor in the home or relatives that live near by. Ms. Gamez stated that crime reports for the months of March and April were still being processed (Personal Communication, April 22, 2005). A review of police reports for the period of November 2004 through February of 2005 shows that most domestic violence cases (85 in total) involved some degree of physical violence or substantial threat of violence between family members. In most

cases, spouses or partners were involved and the perpetrator was most often a male adult. The following table displays the number of domestic violence reports made to the Sunland Park Police department by month.

November	December	January	February	Total
21	24	17	23	85

Crimes Committed by Minors

According to Juvenile Crime statistics by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP, 2005), crime rates have steadily dropped since 1994, when crimes involving minors reached a record high. There are currently 70 million Americans under the age of eighteen, a quarter of the total United States population. It is reported that 2.3 million minors were arrested in 2002, which accounts for 17% of all arrests and 15% to 25% of all violent crimes. According to crime statistics, murder accounted for five percent of violent crimes committed by minors, 12% for rape, 14% for robbery and 12% for aggravated assault. In 2003, 2.2 million juveniles were arrested, 11% fewer than the number of arrests in 1999. While rates are decreasing, something is still wrong for statistics to be so high. Percentages and rates may not be exact due to a great number of crimes committed each year going unreported; if no arrest is made, no report will be filed (OJJDP, 2004).

Juvenile crime statistics show that crimes committed by minors are most likely to occur on school days in the hours immediately following the end of a school day. On the weekends most crimes committed by minors occur between the hours of eight and ten at night. In 2003, females accounted for 24% of juvenile arrests for aggravated assault and 32% of juveniles arrested for simple assaults or intimidations (OJJDP, 2003).

The Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) states that the Juvenile Justice Division of the Department of Children, Youth and Families in New Mexico experienced a 9.5% increase in referrals in 1994, a 15.6% increase in 1995, and a 5.9% increase in 1996. The statistics from JRSA state that in 1996 more than 15% of the offenses referred to the juvenile justice system in New Mexico were offenses against persons, and the vast majority of these offenses were violent. Statistics show New Mexico citizens experienced growing fear and concern related to these violent juvenile crimes**.** In 1996 the rate of teen homicides was 50% greater in New Mexico than the U.S.

rate, 22 per 100,000 of 15 to 19 year olds compared to 15 at state level. About 60% of these were committed with firearms and most victims were young men. New Mexico's rate of homicides for teen and young adult men is the fifth highest in the nation, the state Child Fatality Review reports. For males, ages 15 to 24 years, New Mexico's homicide rate is 34 per 100,000, compared with a national rate of 28 per 100,000 (Child Fatality Review, 1997). The following table describes the comparison of juvenile arrests in New Mexico with national statistics (United Way of Central New Mexico, 2003).

Juvenile Justice	NM	US
Juvenile violent crime arrest rate (arrests per 100,000 youths ages 10-17): 1997	316	412
Juvenile property crime arrest rate (arrests per 100,000 youths ages 10-17): 1997	2,956	2,338

According to the Juvenile Citation Program List of Offenses of Dona Ana County, in Sunland Park the total number of cases reported involving minors involved in criminal activity from July 2004 through February 2005 is 15, including males and females; of which 13 are male and two are female. The most often committed crime by minors is possession of marijuana followed by public disturbance. The age range of minors committing these crimes is from 11 to 17 years. According to the citation list, 16 year olds are the age group committing the most crimes, followed by 14 year olds. However, the table does not list traffic violations that might be committed by minors. The following table only shows the crimes committed by minors referred to the Juvenile Citation Program of Dona Ana County.

Juvenile Citation Program List Of Offenses Total from Sunland Park/Santa Teresa	
1. Graffiti	0
2. Shoplifting	1
3.Disorderly Conduct	0
4. Truancy	0
5. Possession of Alcohol	2
6. Trespassing	0
7. Public Affray	4
8.Battery	2
9. Assault	2
10. Runaway	0
11. Concealing ID	0
12. Possession of Paraphernalia	3
13. Possession of Marijuana	5
14. Criminal Damage	1
15. Other	0
Total Number of Referrals	15

Males=13 **Females=2**

Age of Offenders (In Years)

10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
0	1	0	0	4	2	5	3	0

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS PROFILE

The city of Sunland Park, formally known as Anapra, is situated at the base of the majestic natural mountains of Mount Cristo Rey, where hundreds of people participate in a pilgrimage twice a year and visit the shrine located at the top of the mountain. Sunland Park is also home to one of the region's main tourist attraction, the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino. In the spring of 2006, Sunland Park will have a grand opening for Western Playland Amusement Park, which is currently located in El Paso, Texas. Along with the assistance from the Economic Development Alliance based in Mesilla Valley, Sunland Park is in a position to bring new jobs and generate income to this growing community.

Sunland Park covers 11.268 square miles of land and is the southernmost city in Dona Ana County, New Mexico. It is west of El Paso, Texas and north of Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. The Rio Grande River, originating in the state of Colorado, flows through Sunland Park. The river can be observed from Anapra to Santa Teresa. Adjacent to the river is the Sierra Del Cristo Rey Mountain, or as it commonly referred to Mount Cristo Rey, which stands 4,675 feet above sea level and 1,000 feet above the surrounding valleys and deserts (New Mexico Economic Development Department, 2002). The terrain around Sunland Park is made up of arid desert land. Plant life includes Chihuahuan flora, such as mesquite, creasote bush, and various cacti. In Sunland Park, there are areas of sand hills and empty lots. Sunland Park has 350 days of sunshine a year and mild winters. Precipitation averages 9.2 inches per year of rainfall. For the most part, the city experiences mild, sunny, and dry weather (Sunland Park Comprehensive Qualitative Community Assessment, 2002).

Sunland Park contains one major street, McNutt Road, which runs through the city. This street begins in the community of Anapra and continues north through Santa Teresa to Country Club Road.

The Community Characteristics Profile will include information on the: 1) incorporation and growth, 2) community boundaries, 3) new home construction, 4) commercial, economic, and industrial development, 5) politics, 6) religion, 7) cultural issues, 8) the marginalized population of Anapra, 9) environmental contamination, 10) street maintenance, and 11) public transportation.

Incorporation and Growth

The community of Sunland Park was called Anapra until 1960 when the Sunland Park Racetrack was built and the name of the town was changed to help promote the park (New Mexico Municipal League, 2005). However, actual incorporation as a city did not occur until July 5, 1984. Tall buildings do not exist in Sunland Park. One and two story homes, apartment complexes, and mobile homes are the most common structure, along with small businesses, stores, offices, and churches. The most expensive and luxurious structure in the city is the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino.

There are three major neighborhoods within Sunland Park; Anapra, Riverside, and Meadow Vista, although some residents identify smaller neighborhoods within the city limits. Anapra is an oldest community within Sunland Park and has existed since 1924. Anapra, on a narrow strip of land, is located between the Rio Grande River and Mount Cristo Rey, and therefore has very little land to grow and expand. Although this community has grown, to date the residents only represent approximately 4.5% of the total Sunland Park population (Anapra Community Assessment, Spring 2004). Currently, the majority of growth within Sunland Park is occurring within and to the north of the communities of Riverside and Meadow Vista.

Several factors are linked to and may affect the growth within this community. First, the majority of residents have no desire to move out of the community. Over the years, long time residents of Sunland Park have seen major changes that improved the city, and many these changes are received well within the community. Typical of current or former colonia communities, Sunland Park residents continue the tradition of building onto their original structures to eventually live in a better home. Houses are being built next to original dwellings and when completed, the family moves into the newer home while using materials from the old structure for repairs and add-ons. Most residents are pleased with the plans for Sunland Park and conveyed that growth in the community would benefit their town.

Second, the community of Sunland Park attracts many more potential residents compared to the larger cities because of the overall lower tax rates within the state of New Mexico. New Mexico has much lower property taxes and housing costs than the nearby cities, of El Paso, Texas and Las Cruces, New Mexico. Because Sunland Park

enjoys being a smaller community in population, they also enjoy the benefit of a noticeable decrease in the noise pollution, along with less traffic.

Lastly, the political establishment of Sunland Park supports the improvements in the city and encourages the community to join in the celebration of a more visited and improved community. Independent businesses are considered vital to the community and are encouraged to remain. There is an established plan to boost the economy with new attractions for tourists and to bring more commerce to the city. Perspectiva, a contracting firm, has set forth plans for Sunland Park's growth. Future plans include a sports complex, a Digimax theater, Mount Cristo Rey Amphitheater, a Mercado de Rivera, a riverwalk, a proposed Sunland Park/Anapra Port of Entry, an expansion of US 85 and NM 273 interchange to accommodate the increased traffic, and the McNutt Road lane expansion (Master Plan, 2004). In an interview with Angelica Marquez in the Community Development Department, the Master Plan for the community is scheduled for completion within the next five to ten years was approved by the city council in 2004. The paving of roads will continue in the community and a completion date was not given (Personal interview, April 1, 2005). During the spring 2005, planning continues for a new municipal complex to be located north of the city center, construction of the Western Playland theme park was underway, and the first phase of the expansion of Sunland Park Drive was near completion, expanding it from a two-lane highway to a four-lane highway. This highway renovation was supported by state and federal funds. Additional proposals include another bridge across the Rio Grande River near the casino and the new site for the theme park.

Community Boundaries

The city of Sunland Park has three major neighborhoods that are different from one another. Anapra is the smallest and southernmost area within Sunland Park. The homes of Anapra are similar to homes in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Many of the homes in Anapra appear to be self-built. Many were also built prior to the building code development or enforcement and many homes come out to the edge of the road. There are not many visible yards. In front of some homes are stacks of firewood, which are used during the winter months. Some homes have driveways that have not been paved and have parked cars that do not appear to be in working condition.

The Meadow Vista community is north of Anapra and begins at Posey Road and continues through mile marker three along McNutt Road. The homes in Meadow Vista are more modern than those in Anapra. The majority of homes are built of brick and/or stucco and the yards are more often landscaped. Most homes have wrought iron on their windows and have wrought iron fences and gates around the front of their yards. Many homes in Meadow Vista also appear to have been self-built to some extent, and many have one and/or two story additions. Also, some are mobile homes with wood framed additions. Those mobile homes in mobile home parks are on designated lots and appear to be well maintained.

The Riverside community is the northernmost community of Sunland Park and begins on Ross Street and continues for two miles along McNutt Road to Tierra Madre. The houses in Riverside are very similar in appearance to those in the community of Meadow Vista. Just to the north of Riverside is a very small sub-division, Santa Teresita. This subdivision is less than one mile away and according to Sunland Park Police Officer Ivan Zarate, this subdivision is only a loop off of Country Club Road (Personal Communication, April 2005).

There is a small, but growing, sub-division northwest of the Riverside community, called Tierra Madre. Most of the homes of Tierra Madre are newly constructed passive solar straw-bale homes. The straw bale homes are low cost homes that the owners must invest in by providing their time and efforts into building the homes themselves, along with volunteers from various organizations. Homes in Tierra Madre are designed to meet the needs of low-income first time buyers. Tierra Madre also has a small community center.

There is a second small sub-division in Sunland Park, named Ranchos Del Rio, which is approximately one square mile in size. The sub-division, separated from the rest of Sunland Park by the Rio Grande River, is located northwest of the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino and east of the Rio Grande River. Although, this area may appear to be in Texas, it is actually in New Mexico. This area appears to be the most affluent neighborhood, as the homes are more spacious than those in the communities of Anapra, Meadow Vista, and Riverside.

Sunland Park has five apartment complexes that are located in the communities of Meadow Vista and Riverside; Vista Del Rey, Villa Del Sol, Playa Apartments Phase I, Playa Apartments Phase II, and Villa Del Rio. They all appear to be newly constructed and are made of stucco. They are all well maintained and have parking spaces available for the residents. These units have grass and some have playground areas.

New Home Construction

Currently in the City of Sunland Park, there exists a master plan that is followed by city officials. A master plan is defined as, "in land-use law, a municipal plan for housing, industry, and recreation facilities including the projected environmental impact (Master Plan, 8)." According to Ms. Carter, the master plan is simply used as a guide for the city to follow, and ensure that growth in the city correlates with the city's wishes to consider and maintain environmental quality (Personal Communication, January 28, 2005). In following the Master Plan, the city wishes to promote uniformity in the style of new homes that are constructed (Master Plan, 77).

According to Ms. Carter, the city wishes to maintain the "southwestern look" (Personal Communication, April 26, 2005). The city follows the ordinances based on the Universal Building Code (UBC) to ensure that homebuilders and contractors meet legally established standards. Permits and inspections are necessary when building a new home to ensure the general building, electrical, and gas hook-up are in compliance with the code that the city follows. A copy of the UBC followed by the city is available to all residents with access to the Internet.

Ms. Carter stated that in order to ensure that violators not following the UBC are located and cited, Code Enforcement Officers travel around the city searching for violations. Upon discovering violators, code enforcement officers will notify residents that they are in violation of building without following the proper protocol.

Prior to the regulations and ordinances developed and followed by the city, parts of the community in Sunland Park were already built. According to Ms. Carter, the city considers and respects this by restricting code enforcement officers from enforcing building code violations on existing buildings, as long as there are no new additions or current additions in the process of being completed (Personal Communication, January 28, 2005). Currently, when building additions, code enforcement officers are allowed to

enforce all updated codes (Mary Carter, January 28, 2005). It is for this reason that many low-income residents remain living in unregulated residences.

Commercial, Economic, and Industrial Development

During the last two years the city of Sunland Park has been growing rapidly in relation to its commercial, economic, and industrial development. The city of Sunland Park offers a variety of services to its residents; the majority of which are headquartered at the City Hall Complex located on McNutt Road. The Community Development Department is responsible for building inspection, planning, zoning, opening new businesses, and contract administration. Mary Carter is the Special Projects Coordinator and Angelica Marquez is the Administrative Assistant. Ms. Marquez is the designated person to meet with when starting any new business.

Land use within the city limits of Sunland Park has been classified in zones. This system was adopted in 2000, which designates existing commercial and industrial zones; as well as zoning in areas yet to be developed (Master Plan, 2004). According to the Mater Plan (2004), the zone designated as Light Commercial District allows a mixture of residential and retail commercial activities. General Commercial District zones allow commercial activities that serve the community on a daily basis, such as grocery stores and restaurants. Light Industrial District zones allow the establishment of commercial development, such as warehousing and light manufacturing operations with no residential development. Lastly, the Heavy Industrial District allows for heavy manufacturing.

As stated, businesses in the city are primarily located along McNutt Road. The different businesses found in the city include manufacturing, retail trade, family-owned shops, and food services. The online New Mexico Sunland Park Directory lists approximately 53 business locations and categorizes these services as follows: Apparel Stores, Automotive, Construction, Business Service, Education and Careers, Finance, Restaurants, Family Health, Physicians, Home and Office, Gifts, Real Estate, Recreation and Sports, and Travel. According to the Business Registration List, there are 280 commercial and home businesses opened and operating in the city of Sunland Park (Community Development Department, 2005). New businesses have been opened and others are part of the city's master plan for the coming years.

According to Ms. Carter, approximately 28 new commercial ventures were approved during the last two years (Personal Communication, February 28, 2005). These include the Plaza Del Sol, where a number of businesses, such as the Family Dollar, King's Pizza, a laundromat, Tam Finance Loans, and Continental Credit Company, are located. A number of well-established businesses have been operating in the city for the past 12 to 30 years; of which two of the oldest are Sunland Park Grocery and La Chiquita Grocery (Carter, M., Personal Communication, February 28, 2005). Rafael Ramirez, manager of Sunland Park Grocery, stated one reason his store has been able to operate for approximately 30 years is that community residents do not have to travel a long way to El Paso in order to buy groceries (Personal Communication, March 8, 2005). La Chiquita grocery store has been opened for twelve years, and the manager and former owner of the store, Roberto Perez, stated the store serves the community by making available to the customers all the essential products they might need; so that the community residents do not have to travel to Ciudad Juarez in order to obtain Mexican products, because they are available at La Chiquita (Personal Communication, March 8, 2005).

The city of Sunland Park Community Development Department is currently working with a private sector firm in an effort to implement the Master Plan, which addresses concerns related to the city's development that will take place during the next five to ten years (M. Carter, Personal Communication, February 2005). The Master Plan was developed as a guide for officials and community participants to work together in an organized manner to plan growth and development in the city. The approval and initial development of this important document is greatly attributed to the current Mayor and City Council, the Community Development Office, the Planning Commission, and public input. The Master Plan highlights the goals and objectives for the future of the city of Sunland Park. Goals and objectives for the city emphasize issues related to infrastructure and other areas of growth, such as attracting new businesses. The Sunland Park Master Plan envisions four specific enterprises that will improve the city, attract more tourists, and enhance Sunland Park's economic independence from surrounding cities, especially El Paso, Texas. Among these is Western Playland, for which its construction has already begun. Others businesses that are planned in Sunland Park include a conference center, theater, and recreational vehicle park. These new businesses will attract even more

commerce to Sunland Park, and the city's economic development will increase (Master Plan, 2004). Opening new businesses will permit Sunland Park to generate revenues that will in turn improve the funding base for basic services (Carter, M., Personal Communication, February 28, 2005).

Politics

Sunland Park has a mayor-council form of municipal government with an annual operating budget of approximately $9.5 million (New Mexico Municipal League, 2001). The local government of Sunland Park is composed of current Mayor Ruben Segura, Councilor Silvia Gomez (District One), Councilor Danielle Hill (District Two), Councilor Norma Garcia (District Three), Mayor Pro-Tem and Councilor Connie Ordoñez (District Four), Councilor Mariciela Monsivaiz (District Five), and Councilor Juan A. Fuentes (District Six). The mayor and councilors are responsible for making decisions that affect the citizens of Sunland Park. They meet twice a month on the first and third Tuesday of each month throughout the year.

The key player in the politics of Sunland Park is Mayor Ruben Segura. He is the most visible political figure in the community and he actively advocates for his city. Mayor for over nine years, he now has the experience to find what works for the city as a whole. Mayor Segura grew up in Sunland Park and has lived there throughout the twenty years that the city has been incorporated. He was inspired to go into politics when he realized that the landfill in the city was harmful to the community. According to Mayor Segura, people in the community did not have the legal knowledge to defend themselves and this is when he began to take an interest in the politics of his city with a grassroots approach to community organizing. Mayor Segura earned a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and Spanish and his Master's Degree in Public Administration; and was then elected as a city councilor and mayor pro-tem. He was soon elected mayor of Sunland Park, placing emphasis on issues such as: unemployment rates, quality of life, and the lack of basic services. The city now provides water, sewer, and solid waste services to its residents.

Sunland Park lacks political participation of its residents for a number of reasons. One is Sunland Park's proximity to El Paso, Texas. According to Zoe Rueda, a local resident of Sunland Park, most people that live in the city do not work in Sunland Park

but rather in El Paso (Personal Communication, April 9, 2005). When asked about the relationship with El Paso's city government, Mayor Segura shows complete respect and cooperation. He stated that the city of El Paso should not budget any money for Sunland Park because his desire is for Sunland Park to be as independent as possible. The idea is that Sunland Park and El Paso can both benefit from each other's economy.

Mayor Segura stated his desire to bring hotels and other various retail establishments to Sunland Park to not only help his city become more independent but also to expand the tax base. The Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino brings thousands of tourists and regulars weekly, but most of them utilize retail establishments in El Paso. When asked of his relationship with the mayor of El Paso, Mayor Segura stated that he has a great sense of respect for current Mayor Wardy and past Mayor Caballero. Mayor Segura clearly stated that the two cities were not in competition but striving to work together to form strong ties for the betterment of both cities.

Because of some issues, such as the proposed re-opening of ASARCO, Mayor Segura is actively involved with the city council of El Paso to ensure it does not reopen. Mayor Segura believes that the smog from ASARCO is simply too problematic and that the city of El Paso is on the right track by attracting a four-year medical school instead. He also stated that when ASARCO was in operation, the cloud of pollution that covered the Sunland Park area was enough to make him stand up for the future environmental safety of his city. Regarding the argument that ASARCO could bring high-paying jobs to the residents of Sunland Park, Mayor Segura responds by saying that other avenues for high-paying jobs should be sought instead.

Religion

The 2000 US Census does not include data related to religious affiliation. Therefore, information related to religion included in this report has been based on estimates offered by various community residents and agency employees. According to Dexter Katzman, the librarian at the Sunland Park Library, about 65% of Sunland Park residents are Catholic, 25% are Christian Evangelical, and the remaining 10% are other Christian religious denominations (Personal Communication, February 7, 2005). After further community observations and speaking to other community members, it seemed that these percentages do appear to be a good rough estimate. However, Padre Ed Herrera

Chavez, priest of the only Roman Catholic Church in Sunland Park, states that 95% of the residents are Catholic (Personal Communication, March 4, 2005). Although estimates of the actual Catholic population of Sunland Park may vary, it is clear that Roman Catholicism remains the largest Christian religious denomination within the city.

Religion is a very important aspect of the city of Sunland Park, New Mexico. Residents show how important this is to them in various ways. Driving through the neighborhoods, you can see homes with pictures of the Virgen de Guadalupe on their doors and sometimes on the walls, while some homes have statues of saints in their front yards. In the community's grocery stores, there are many religious items, such as religious candles and postcards with a various saints, such as San Martin de Porras and the Virgen de Guadalupe.

According to the Spring 2002 Sunland Park Community Assessment, Padre Ed Herrera Chavez heads the San Martin de Porras Catholic Church and has been in this church for over 10 years. At the time of his arrival, the landfill issue was dividing the community, so his initial goal was to bring peace and unity to the community. Ultimately, Sunland Park has the distinction of being the only city in the southwest that has granted a major landfill permission to operate within city limits. This issue made residents angry with previous elected city officials. Padre Herrera stated he worked hard to empower and teach his parishioners the way to address governments which included: 1) instruction on placing items on an agenda, 2) switching meetings conducted in English only in a predominately Spanish-speaking community into the language of the community, and 3) utilizing the power of well-placed reports to the press. Padre Herrera was so effective in repairing the image and unity of the Catholic Church in Sunland Park, he was asked to stay. Padre Herrera is a very dedicated member of his community and continues to be a strong advocate for the residents in the community.

Mount Cristo Rey is a very important icon of the religious culture of the community of Sunland Park. During the mid-1930s, many Sunland Park residents assisted the sculptor in building the statue that was eventually completed in 1939, by picking their way around boulders and cacti and carrying buckets of cements up Cristo Rey as an act of faith. Cristo Rey not only unifies the Catholics in Sunland Park, but also brings together other Catholics from the surrounding area. On Mount Cristo Rey's 4,675-

foot peak is a 30-foot-tall limestone statue of Christ that has attracted hundreds of thousands of worshippers over the past six decades. Twice a year, on Good Friday and on December 12th, Dia de la Virgen de Guadalupe, pilgrims make the 820-foot vertical climb as part of a pilgrimage to visit and pray at the shrine. Many of the worshippers believe that making the pilgrimage will strengthen their faith (Roberts, C., November 1, 2004).

Cultural Issues

The Sunland Park community is primarily Hispanics. Although one might assume most of the residents migrated from Mexico, many actually relocated to the area from the surrounding cities of El Paso, Texas and Las Cruces, New Mexico. According to Father Herrera, a priest at San Martin de Porras Catholic Church, many of the residents moved to Sunland Park for a variety of reasons.

Residents move to Sunland Park because the majority of them share a common background, language, as well as, values, beliefs, and ideas. It is a very familiar way of living. From their neighbors, to their grocery store clerks, they feel safe with one another. According to Father Herrera, many residents do not desire to assimilate to the American culture and prefer to speak Spanish.

Father Herrera believes Sunland Park accommodates people who are from another country, especially Mexico. People from Mexico often migrate to the Untied States to live "the American Dream." They want the opportunity to obtain an education and obtain a job that pays a decent wage. Residing in Sunland Park, provides people with the opportunity to improve their lives, while still maintaining their own identity and most important, their culture. According to Father Herrera, religion plays a major role in the culture of the community.

Father Herrera also stated that some residents also reject authority and government and believe they are capable of handling difficult situations themselves. Many social issues affect the residents of the Sunland Park community and it is embedded in the Hispanic culture of the region to not speak of problems that exists within the family. The community is fearful of addressing issues, such as teen drug use and domestic violence. They do not trust government and hesitate to discuss their problems with formal service providers. Since some of the professionals in Sunland Park agencies also live in the community, two problems can create a barrier between them and

the residents they are there to help. First, many residents do not want others in the community to know their business and do not trust these people to keep their personal problems confidential. Second, many of the professionals feel a sense of betrayal if one has to report their neighbor or friend. This is a common theme in rural or close-knit ethnic communities (Coggins and Hatchett, 2002) and Sunland Park is no exception.

Diana Tellez, Director of Child Development, believes that education is important to community residents. She feels that parents are not only concerned with the education of their children, but they are also concerned about educating themselves. Most parents do not strive for a college education, but feel their children will be the ones obtaining college degrees. Parents are more concerned with learning to speak English, since most of the jobs require them to able to communicate to some extent in English.

Marginalized Population of Anapra

Sunland Park can be described as a territorial or place-based community. Strong allegiances exist within the specific neighborhoods of Meadow Vista, Riverside, and Anapra. While close ties are made and usually kept within neighborhood boundaries, there are those populations within the boundaries of Sunland Park that are considered to be marginalized; Anapra is one such community.

According to the Sunland Park Master Plan, in 1924, Southern Pacific Railroad purchased the El Paso and Southwestern Railroads, and the town of Anapra was established. Many railroad employees and their families made Anapra their home. Eventually, Southern Pacific closed their route westward at Anapra; however, the established families remained in the Anapra area. In 1960, the Sunland Park Racetrack was built and the name of the town was changed to help promote the park. Today, many residents in Anapra feel neglected by the Sunland Park community and even the elected officials. This perception is partly the result of a long held belief that those living in Anapra were overlooked when the town's name was officially changed from Anapra to Sunland Park. Unofficially, the community residents still distinguish and refer to themselves as residents of Anapra.

In speaking to residents within and outside the area of Anapra, the feelings of alienation result from one generation passing their perceptions and ideas onto younger generations. When interviewing Lilia Moreno, who works at La Casita de Anapra, she

stated that it has been her experience that residents of Anapra feel estranged from the rest of Sunland Park and believes this has been passed on from generation to generation. Although, there has been some improvement in Anapra's relationships with other neighborhoods, the youth for the most part keep to themselves and interact with people from their own neighborhoods. Ms. Moreno mentioned the issue of gangs and the rivalries, which exist with other neighboring gangs. She stated that the existing gangs are very territorial and, as a result there is a lot of labeling that takes place among the youth from surrounding neighborhoods, by associating themselves from Anapra or from Meadow Vista, for example, instead of viewing themselves as residents of Sunland Park (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005).

Lynne Brooks, a social work student from the University of Texas at El Paso, who completed her pre-internship at La Casita de Anapra, stated the youth of Anapra have a strong sense of pride in their neighborhood. As a result, when fellow students from the other neighborhoods of Sunland Park would make negative or derogatory comments about Anapra and its appearance, the students from Anapra felt an obligation to defend their community and confrontations would result (Personal Communication, April 23, 2005). According to Ms. Brooks and community residents, there is the perception that the strongest tension exists between the communities of Anapra and Meadow Vista.

According to Pastor Jose Perez, of Victoria en Jesus Cristo, he also agreed that the residents of Anapra feel divided from the rest of Sunland Park. He stated the residents from Anapra and the other neighborhoods fail to remember they are all residents of Sunland Park, and as such, they are serviced by the same police and fire department, as well as have the same postal services. Pastor Perez, also stated many residents in Anapra, Meadow Vista, and Riverside want to see divisions because there is a set mentality at play, which makes it difficult for them to leave old perceptions behind and move forward as a united community (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005).

Another component of a marginalized population concerns legal status; which includes those who are undocumented in the city of Sunland Park. Debates occur when the issue of cutting social services at the expense of these non-citizen residents or those considered "less deserving" is introduced. Some raise the issue that providing social services creates a "culture of dependency" on behalf of the undocumented immigrants.

Therefore, by denying them welfare benefits and services, which supposedly attracted them initially to their host cities, they will then likely return to their country and our own country's fiscal burdens will be eased, as a result. According to The International Migration Review:

> "In the United States, the capacity of American society to continue incorporating large numbers of immigrants has been called into question. Concern over the impact of legal and illegal migration on demographic composition, the low wage, high unemployment sector of the native population, on social services, local schools, property taxes, language standards, etc., has created considerable anti-immigrant resentment" (Kurthen, 1).

This is an example of why those who are undocumented are marginalized by the rest of the population. For decades, undocumented immigrants have entered the United States for basic economic survival. While many reside within our communities, they are seen as a population that does not belong and many times the contributions they make to our society go unnoticed.

A recent UNITE HERE press release by union presidents, who together represent over three million workers, many of whom are immigrants, gathered together to support comprehensive immigration reform, included; John Wilhelm, President/Hospitality Industry of UNITE HERE, Andrew L. Stern, President of Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and Terence M. O'Sullivan, General President of Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA). The following statement was issued:

> "Some 10 million undocumented immigrants live in the United States, and most are here to work. These immigrant workers make our clothes, bus our tables, clean our hotel rooms, cook our food, care for our children, tend to the elderly, harvest the nation's crops, and help build and clean America's homes and buildings. These immigrant workers just want to be recognized for their hard work and accepted as part of the nation's family. They want to get on the path to legal status and full rights, to reunite with their families, to have a voice on the job, and to be treated fairly. But these rights and opportunities are denied them due to their lack of immigration status and due to outdated laws, which subject many of those here in search of the American Dream to abuse, fear, and marginalization."

On September 5, 2001, Presidente Vicente Fox and President George Bush met to discuss immigration policy, border relations, and the possible amnesty for over three million undocumented Mexicans living in the Unites States. Bill 245i would

have granted amnesty to Mexicans without documents living in the United States as of February 2001. However, after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S. the bill was dropped (Committee on U.S.-Latin American Relations [CUSLAR] Newsletter, Winter 2002).

Environmental Contamination

Major environmental contamination concerns in the Sunland Park, New Mexico area are the landfill, ASARCO, soil and river contamination, and smog. Additional concerns, in relation to the environment, are mosquito-borne diseases, illnesses, and rabies control. The United States and Mexico Border governors and various administrators have formed alliances for the purpose of increasing state-to-state cooperation to develop an approach to environmental planning.

In 1998, a Framework for Cooperation was established between Mexico and the United States and in 1999 New Mexico entered into discussions. At the end of October 2001, an agreement was made between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Mexico's SEMARNAT (Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources) which stated participation should come from the border communities and in 2003, a new program, called Border 2012, was implemented (New Mexico Environment Department [NMED], 2002).

The Camino Real Landfill

The Camino Real Landfill once called Nu-Mex Landfill is located at 1000 Camino Real Blvd, junction to Highway 273 (Mc Nutt Road). The Camino Real Landfill is a privately owned facility that covers a desert area west of Sunland Park near the Mexican border. This landfill is approximately 480 acres; of which 126.1 acres are currently permitted for landfill use (EPA, Nu-Mex Summary Assessment Report, 2005). The Camino Real Landfill is inspected by the EPA and NMED every month and continues to meet all perimeter standards for the permit.

Approximately 340 vehicles a day use the landfill; of which 200 to 250 are commercial disposal trucks. The total dumping volume of the landfill is 7000 cubic yards per day or 2100 tons. The Camino Real Landfill is regulated by the New Mexico Environmental Department and the United States Environmental Agency. The residents of Sunland Park do not pay a fee to use the landfill (Nu-Mex NMED Landfill Site

Assessment Summary Report, 2005). The environmental concern relates to contaminates from Camino Real Landfill getting into the Sunland Park community. The issues of concern are air, water, and soil contaminantion, hazardous/solid waste dumping, Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL's), Maquiladora waste, and illegal dumping, including medical waste. The landfill has been in operation since 1987 and does not accept toxic or liquid/hazardous waste.

According to Dr. Joe King, Director of the landfill, four types of waste are permitted; which are residential, commercial and industrial, Maquiladora (American-owned Mexican twin plant) and petroleum waste (Personal Communication, February 28, 2005). The residential waste from Sunland Park's residential areas includes trash from commercial haulers. The industrial and commercial waste is from institutional, industrial, commercial, and apartment complexes, which includes Dona Ana and El Paso counties (Nu-Mex NMED Site Assessment Summary Report, 2005). The landfill controls odor by a process of constant covering of waste with soil. Most of the solid wastes hauled to the landfill are non-odorous material from businesses and industries (Nu-Mex NMED Site Assessment Summary Report, 2005).

In 1996, community residents became concerned of the increasing amounts of traffic, noise, trash blowing outside the landfill, and odor. There were health concerns about possible problems, such as asthma, allergies, and cancer (BorderLines, 1996). In New Mexico, Camino Real is inspected once every month (Nu-Mex NMED Landfill Site Assessment Summary Report, 2005). The Camino Real Landfill summary report states that soil, municipal, or hydrocarbon sludge does not exceed high toxicity characteristics (Nu-Mex Landfill Site Assessment Summary Report, 2005). The Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP) tests and detects any hazardous elements that can contaminate water coming from the waste (Nu-Mex NMED Landfill Site Assessment Summary Report, 2005).

Dr. King stated there are 43 methane monitor wells in the landfill that look for minimum gases, monitor the gases, such as methane, and carbon dioxide, and in addition monitor the oxygen level, which is kept below 5% because the gases are explosive and flammable. The decomposing organic material produces methane, a deadly, poisonous gas (Nu-Mex NMED Landfill Site Assessment Summary Report, 2005).

Another community concern is the groundwater contamination coming from the landfill. The groundwater in the vicinity of the landfill is monitored for Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), which are levels of common contaminants allowed by state and federal regulatory entities. The Federal EPA has mandated installation of a composite liner made out of high-density polyethylene that filters soluble matter slowly to prevent groundwater contamination. Surface water or run-off water that is rainwater, leachate, or other liquids that drain over land onto any part of the landfill are routed by channels and dams. Landfill workers unload and inspect material before dumping to check for illegal dumping. Airborne trash is controlled by a litter fence system, and is picked-up by employees. The landfill has implemented a program to survey the monitored sources of litter in their area of the landfill (Nu-Mex NMED, Assessment Report, 2005). Studies are made of the noise levels and the neighboring noise sources, including the southern Pacific Railroad. Roads and any dust related areas are continuously sprayed to lower the dust in the air during normal working hours (Nu-Mex NMED, Assessment Report, 2005).

ASARCO

The American Smelting and Refining Company or, as it commonly referred to, ASARCO is located in El Paso, Texas and is four miles from Sunland Park, New Mexico. In 1887, this facility was built on a tract of more than 600 acres along the Rio Grande River when El Paso was small (Bernstein, 2004). This facility purified lead and two years later ASARCO added a copper smelter. In 1940, ASARCO built a secondary zinc fuming operation that functioned until 1982 (Bernstein, 2004). In 1985, ASARCO ended the lead smelter operation; along with copper because of the small amounts of material mined and prices of metal dropped to an all-time low (Bernstein, 2004).

In the 1920s, the long-term affects of lead and arsenic were not well understood and airborne exposure was not yet researched (Bernstein, 2004). ASARCO knew sulfur dioxide would kill the crops that were in nearby farmlands. So ASARCO raised the smoke stack above 400 feet and in 1949 it raised the stack to 828 feet (Bernstein, 2004). The community complained to the city authorities about the toxic sulfur clouds in the area. ASARCO produced a dark plume cloud. Concerns and testimonies were made publicly that ASARCO was releasing massive quantities of heavy metals (Bernstein, 2004).

Dr. Bernard Rosenblun, head of the City Health Department, investigated and determined that ASARCO emitted lead, zinc, cadmium, and arsenic from the stack between 1969 and 1971 (Bernstein, 2004). The Center for Disease Control (CDC) determined 59 % of the children from 1 to 9 years old living within 1.6 kilometers of the smelter had levels high enough to be dangerous and there were high levels in the soil beyond the 1.6 kilometer radius (Bernstein, 2004).

According to Taylor Moore, a retired attorney and community activist, in 1999 New Mexico's Children's lead studies skipped the community of Anapra. Although New Mexico's Director of Border Health claims that Anapra children have been tested for lead and the soil was cleaned up, Mr. Moore stated in 2004 that both statements are false. The EPA, in its November 2000 publication, claims that ASARCO had improper waste management that contaminated the soil with cadmium and lead (Enforcement Alert, 2000). In 2005, New Mexico announced it will test for heavy metals in Anapra residents, but only wants urine samples from adults (Moore, 2005).

In 2002, Weston Solutions conducted tests at locations over an approximate six-mile area that centered on a portion in El Paso, Texas, and Sunland Park, New Mexico, and parts south of the Rio Grande River, along Mexico. Residential homes, day care facilities, schools, churches, city properties, public parks, playgrounds, and undeveloped industrial areas of importance were among the locations tested (Weston Solutions Assessment, 2002). The analytical results state in the metal confirmation sampling chart (validated data) that the Sunland Park Racetrack shows high levels of arsenic and lead and the screening at 12 nearby locations exceeded the level for lead (Weston Solutions Assessment, 2002). On July 20, 2002, men, women, and children joined together to protest against the renewal of ASARCO's permit which city authorities were considering renewing (Bernstein, 2002).

Soil Contamination

The soil contaminants from sources other than ASARCO are also a concern in Sunland Park. The sepage (from scrap tires), run-off surface contaminants, sludge, petroleum waste (regulated under the New Mexico Oil and Gas Act), agriculture waste (animal waste and pesticides), and industrial waste all pose threats to maintaining a clean

environment. Scrap tires piles are often checked for soil contaminants, such as heavy metals, oil, ash, toxic substances, and other residues (Blackman and Palma, 2002).

An additional concern of reducing soil contamination was to reduce illegal dumping in Sunland Park. In route to the landfill, heavy trucks would have to travel on local and residential streets and some trucks would dump the trash illegally on open lots in desert areas (Sunland Park Master Plan, 2004). The city has re-routed the trucks that come from other areas, including the racetrack facility through the main route, McNutt Road, to Pete Domenici Highway (Sunland Park Master Plan, 2004). As a result of the illegal dumping in the Sunland Park area, stricter regulations and laws have been implemented (Sunland Park Master Plan, 2004).

River Contamination

The length of the Rio Grande River is 1,885.41 miles (3033Km). The river stretches across two countries, three US states and forms part of the border between the United States and Mexico. The International Boundary Water Commission (IBWC), which works with United States and Mexico, is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the two countries and settling differences that arise in the usage of the river (IBWC Report, 2004).

According to the 2004 IBWC Report, the Clean River Program targets the Lower Rio Grande River international boundary that cover the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo in the New Mexico/Texas and Chihuahua border, which includes the El Paso/Sunland Park/Ciudad Juarez area. IBCW maintains and strives to improve the quality of water within the river basin in order to be in compliance with Clean River Program (IBWC Report, 2004). This program allows IBWC to study, investigate, test (weekly), and obtain lab reports from other sources.

City of Sunland Park Waste Water Treatment Plant is operating within the parameters of Clean Water Act. Sunland Park has a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the EPA authorizing to discharge from the facility into the river. The effluent that is discharged is tested for toxicity from aluminum, mercury, ammonia, and fecal coliform bacteria on a seven-day average and 30-day average (New Mexico Water Treatment Report, 2005). The South Sewage Treatment Plant is operating within its parameters for January 2005. It has a total of

47,602,680 gallons of treated sewage and16, 608,360 gallons of pre-treated and raw sewage discharged in January 2005 (EPA Report, 2005). The industrial park had a material flow of 639,170 gallons or 20,618 gallons on a per day average (EPA Report, 2005). The Extended Aeration Agreement between New Mexico and Texas involves industries/factories that New Mexico allows to obtain a permit to discharge. According to Mr. Alvarado, the purpose of the permit is to mandate what New Mexico industries/factories put in their drains (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). Sunland Park is in compliance with NPDES permit to discharge and conduct oil and grease test procedures (EPA Report, 2005).

The Sunland Park area has surface drainage that occurs when it rains, in which oil and grease is carried into the river. This surface water is not treated, but the building and construction in the Sunland Park area has blocking in place to prevent water from reaching the river. According to Mr. Alvarado, there is a concern for contaminants in the river because in the Anapra area there are no proper sewage pipes and no proper drainage system (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). IBWC reports the most commonly found toxins in the river in acute concentration are aluminum, copper, and zinc. The most commonly found in chronic concentration by standard levels are arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury, nickel, and selenium (IBCW Report, 2004). One probable source of contaminants tested and regulated periodically is agriculture (non-point source specific pollution that does not have a permit) addressed by the state through a voluntary program called the Best New Mexico Water Resource Research (Bordering NM, 2002). Other concerns about river contaminants are land disposal operations, off-road vehicle use, natural and unknown conditions, spills, recreational problems, run-off from road maintenance, and disposal/littering (Bordering NM, 2002).

The main concern about river contamination is the pathogen called e-coli bacteria, which exceed the IBCW standards. The Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), such as beef cattle, ranching and farm animals, hogs, sheep, general livestock, dairy farms, hatcheries, horses, and other equines are regulated. EPA regulates the requirements for CAFOs and estimates that 15,500 CAFOs effectively manages 300 million tons of manure that they produce annually. CAFOs need to apply for a NPDES permit (IBCW Report, 2002).

Controlling Water Runoff

According to Mr. Alvarado, water runoff is rainwater that does not soak into the ground (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). Pollutants, such as pet waste, lawn fertilizer, pesticides, yard debris, litter, cigarette butts, oil, antifreeze, car soap, and household kitchen greases, runs off streets into a river source after rain fall. Mr. Alvarado stated all these pollutants are carried into the river every time it rains (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). In larger cities there are structures used around building sites that work to prevent water runoff from carrying construction debris into the river. In these areas, proper measures around a building site are employed to ensure, if rainfall were to occur, work site debris would not be carried away and into a water source.

Sunland Park has no set regulations to avoid water runoff from reaching the Rio Grande River. In certain areas of the city there are limited water collection systems that work to prevent the water runoff after a storm from reaching the river. In the Anapra community, there are no such systems at all, therefore, allowing water runoff to reach the river. As a result, the untreated water runoff is mixing with water that has already been treated at El Paso's water treatment facility. Nonetheless, Mr. Alvarado reassures that the contamination of water runoff does not reach or contaminate the city water system (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005).

Drinking Water

As of October 2000, Sunland Park controls all its water sources with the water managed through ECO Resources, Inc. According to Tony Alvarado, the Operator Manager of ECO Resources Inc., Sunland Park obtains drinking water from four water wells drilled into the Mesilla Bolson of the Rio Grande Basin (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). These wells are northwest of the Riverside community. Currently, two more wells in Sunland Park are being repaired and may provide water to the city in the future.

The total number of water and sewer connections for Sunland Park is 3,874; there are 128 additional accounts that only have a water connection and seven additional accounts that only have a sewer connection (ECO Resources, Inc., February 2005). Currently, there are no serious drought problems and, therefore no water restrictions for the residents in Sunland Park.

The sources of the drinking water are generally protected from potential sources of contamination based on well construction, hydro-geological settings, and system operations and management. According to Mr. Alvarado, the susceptibility rank of the enter system is moderately low (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). Any contaminants found in the drinking water do not impose any health risks. The drinking water meets all EPA and state drinking water health standards and in the past year there have been no system violations for contamination. Mr. Alvarado states, the drinking water system meets all Federal and State requirements (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005).

Wastewater

According to Mr. Alvarado, wastewater is treated with extended aeration, ultra-violet (UV) radiation, and clarification before it is released into the river (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). Some of the contaminants treated are oil, greases, salt, and nitrogen. Mr. Alvarado stated, that according to the 2004 Wastewater Discharge Report, the wastewater sewer flow for the city of Sunland Park ranged between 45 million to 61 million gallons per month (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). ECO Resources has a NPDES Permit, which must be kept current in order to release water into the river. This permit is monitored through the NMED and the EPA. According to Mr. Alvarado, testing for contaminants in the river is done by the International Boundary Commission and the EPA (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005).

Smog

The Integrated Border Environmental Plan (IBEP) helped El Paso/Ciudad, Juarez/Sunland Park develop the Paso del Norte Air Quality Management Task Force and Joint Advisory Committee to emphasize cooperation and a solution to the air pollution problem (Borderlines, 2000). Pollution does not have boundaries and health problems are a major concern. The International Air Quality Management District (IAQMD) agreement between the two countries (Mexico and the US) is specifically for the purpose of monitoring, planning, and managing the air quality in the air basin, and furthermore, to address the concerns of a healthy environment and to educate the public regarding air quality issues (Borderlines, 2000).

The problems faced in the Paso del Norte region of Southern Dona Ana County are high concentrations of ozone and particulate matter (Borderlines, 2000), air pollution from tire pile fires and the use of tires as fuel (Blackman and Palma, 2002), and Maquiladoras (Blackman, Batz, and Evans, 2004). Sunland Park can and does fail standards for air quality because of the contaminated air coming from El Paso and Ciudad Juarez (Simmons and Vinas, March 2005).

One major pollutant in the area is low-level ozone. Ground level ozone consists of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides that change and cause oxygen to become ozone. Carbon monoxide increases during the fall and winter months or low wind days (Borderlines, 2000). In the Paso del Norte area the VOCs, nitrogen oxides, and carbon monoxide are from mobile sources, such as motor vehicle emissions, and major point sources coming from fuel storage, manufacturers produce VOCs, and smaller area wide sources, such as a generated power plant, industries, and burning of trash which produces nitrogen oxides, and hydrocarbons (Borderlines 2000).

According to Blackman and Palma (2002), an additional concern with smog in the Paso del Norte area is tire pile fires, which pose a serious health threat to humans. Tire pile fires are hard to extinguish and generate toxic air pollution. Ciudad Juarez has the largest tire piles in Paso del Norte region (Blackman and Palma, 2002). Burning tires in the open is estimated to produce 16 times more mutagenic toxins than emissions from residential wood-burning fireplaces and 13 times more mutagenic toxins than emissions from coal-fired utilities with good emission control equipment (Blackman and Palma, 2002). These hazardous air pollutants are poly-nuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH), dioxins, hydrogen chloride, benzene, poly chlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and heavy metals, such as lead and arsenic. The major health concerns are irritation of skin, eyes, and mucous membranes, respiratory ailments, depression of the central nervous system, and cancer.

According to Mary Carter, the Special Projects Coordinator in the Community Development Department, vehicle emissions are a concern in the area. Although Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino generates revenue necessary for Sunland Park's economic development, it does however, create crowds and heavy traffic that peaks during racing season and on the weekends (Sunland Park Master Plan, 2004). As a result, air pollution,

in relation to vehicle emissions, has an additional impact in the southeast area of Sunland Park. Ms. Carter also stated that the pollution problem would be compounded once Western Playland Amusement Park opens (Personal Communication, January 12, 2005).

Mosquito-borne Diseases and Related Concerns

Sunland Park City Hall provides funds for vector and animal control. The seasonal report for June through September of 2004 states that 6500 acres were fogged with the larvacide costing the city of Sunland Park approximately $7,500. Humberto Hernandez is the Vector/Animal Control Officer for Dona Ana County. Mr. Hernandez stated traps are set out every Monday to catch mosquitoes in areas and mosquitoes caught are analyzed to determine whether or not they are infected with dengue, encephalitis, yellow fever, or West Nile virus (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005). All results are reported to him, as well as to the New Mexico Department of Health.

During the 2004 mosquito season, Sunland Park had 156 mosquitoes that tested positive with the West Nile Virus and one human case that tested positive in Dona Ana County. This created a big concern for the residents of Sunland Park. The Department of Agriculture monitors, regulates, and calibrates (the chemical) the fogger used to spray for the infected mosquitoes. The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and the Department of Agriculture regulate and test the river for possible contaminants from the insecticide used to control mosquitoes. The chemical for an insecticide is synthetic and is effective on adult mosquito, but poses environmental hazards. It is for aerial and ground application only and because it is highly toxic to the fish in the river, the insecticide cannot be applied directly to water.

Another concern is tire piles, these are high-priority in the effort to prevent or slow the outbreaks of mosquito-borne diseases. Treating mosquitoes with an insecticide is difficult because tire piles can be too deep to penetrate. In some cases, high tire piles may require removal (Blackman and Palma, 2002).

The one concern for vector control is the increase of fleas around the Sunland Park Racetrack area because of the horses. Rabies is a minor concern because, to date, there have been no reports. Mr. Hernandez checks immunization records on all animals in the Sunland Park area, including animals brought from Ciudad Juarez and impounds stray animals found in the community. Wildlife is a minor concern in the west Mesa area. The

concern of any bubonic plague is minor at best and Mr. Hernandez stated there were no reports of plague in the Sunland Park area (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005).

Street Maintenance

Services to maintain the streets in Sunland Park are provided by the Public Works Department. According to Ms. Medina, services include the maintenance and repair of potholes, the repair, replacement and placement of street signs, and the paving of unpaved roads (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005). This department, along with the city's Animal Control Department, cleans up carcasses, such as dogs, cats, and other animals, from the roads and streets. Ms. Medina stated the Public Works Department uses general funds or city taxes to finance these services (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005).

Public Transportation

After Sunland Park received a substantial grant of $413,000, the city decided to employ the funds towards a transportation arrangement with the El Paso Sun Metro Transportation System that would be beneficial for the residents (Texas Transit Association, 2003). In 2003, the establishment of bus Route 83 connecting Sunland Park, New Mexico with the cities of El Paso, Texas was initiated (Texas Transit Association, 2003). The bus route allows residents of the city of Sunland Park to reach downtown El Paso, at San Jacinto Plaza, which then allows them to connect with other bus routes that service other destinations within the city of El Paso.

According to Ms. Carter, the Sun Metro Route 83, which carries approximately 1,600 passengers a month, travels from downtown El Paso, through Paisano Road, exiting on McNutt Road (Personal Communication, January 28, 2005). There are two buses which travel in a loop through Sunland Park and has four designated stops in the Sunland Park area; the first stop is at McNutt Road and Calle Morroco in the Anapra community; it then travels up Racetrack Road to its second stop at the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino and then heads back onto McNutt Road, the third stop is located at the intersection of Loma Vista and Ocotillo Road at Elena Memorial Park, and the fourth stop is located at McNutt Road and Riverside Street (Sun Metro, 2005).

The following is the current schedule for the Sunland Park Route 83: Monday through Friday, the bus arrives every hour and a half starting at 6:02 AM, ending at 6:02

PM, Saturdays the bus arrives every hour and a half starting at 9:02 AM, ending at 3:02 PM, and no service is provided on Sundays (Sun Metro, 2005). The one-way fares are $1.00 for a regular rider, $0.50 for students/active military and children ages 6-18 years, $0.30 for senior/disabled/Medicare recipients, $0.10 for transfers, and children 5 years and under ride free and must be accompanied by an adult (Sun Metro, 2005).

Currently, Sun Metro Route 83 is the only public transportation available for the residents of Sunland Park and offers opportunities for both the residents as well as El Paso residents to reach destinations benefiting both communities. Although the service allows Sunland Park residents to reach other destinations for employment and allows El Pasoans easier access to the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino, some Sunland Park residents believe the bus needs more extended hours of service to their community in order to be beneficial.

COMMUNITY SERVICES PROFILE - GENERAL

The Community Services Profile – General Section will include: 1) healthcare services, 2) mental health services, 3) promotoras de salud (health promoters), 4) human services, 5) senior services, 6) public safety resources, 7) religious resources, and 8) recreational resources.

Healthcare Services

The community of Sunland Park provides healthcare for residents primarily through the ***La Clinica de Familia***, which is the largest medical center in the Sunland Park area. This clinic is responsible for primary medical care and dental care. La Clinica de Familia is a non-profit facility that has been in operation for 27 years. Medical services include diagnosis and treatment, prenatal care, immunizations, preventative care, physical examinations, minor in-office surgery, family planning, women's health, migrant health, and diabetes health education, to name a few. All of these services are available to patients from children to adolescents to adults. Dental care is also provided in the clinic and includes emergency care, basic care, and preventive care.

La Clinica de Familia has a policy that no patient will be denied services or treatment based on their inability to pay. Patients may apply for a discount rate if they have no other source of payment (sliding fee schedule). Income and number of household member's determine discount amount. Payments will be 25%, 50% or 75% of total charges for each visit (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005). Patients who qualify for the indigent program make a minimum payment or co-pay for each office visit and for prescriptions. The clinic accepts private insurance, Medicaid and Medicare (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005).

According to Ethel Nunez, a caseworker with the Indigent Care Program at La Clinica de Familia, the indigent program is a widely used program (Personal Communication, February 22, 2005). Once a person has qualified for this program, coverage is complete and the patient pays only for co-payments. Medical care and dental care are a $10 co-payment, prescriptions range from $5 to $15, and hospitalization is covered at 100%. Residents are referred to Memorial Medical Center or Mountain View Regional Medical Center in Las Cruces. Undocumented persons may qualify under different guidelines. Another program for undocumented children under the age of 19 is

the Children's Medical Service. This helps serve the children that fall through the gaps due to citizenship status. The Elder Care portion of this program is used to help seniors pay for what Medicare does not cover. The following chart illustrates the income guidelines used to determine eligibility for the indigent program:

Annual Income Guidelines for Indigent Program:

Individual	$25,102
Family of 2	$38,000
Family of 3	$39,753
Family of 4	$41,253
Family of 5	$42,753
Family of 6	$44,253
Family of 7	$45,753
Family of 8	$47,253
Family of 9	$48,753
Family of 10	$50,253

Medicaid is another large funding source for La Clinica de Familia, as 85% of patients seen are Medicaid recipients. To apply for Medicaid one must be a US citizen or eligible legal resident that has lived in New Mexico for 30 days. Medicaid can be used to fund other New Mexico healthcare providers as well. According to Ms. Nunez, while there are no hospice or home health care agencies in the Sunland Park area, Medicaid recipients can have this type of care paid for by Medicaid if they find an agency in Las Cruces willing to make the commute to care for patients needing hospice care or home health care (Personal Communication, February 22, 2005).

La Clinica de Familia is a comprehensive primary healthcare facility. Some of the services provided extend to free education classes in the community and schools for tobacco use prevention, prenatal information, health education, health fairs, and diabetes education. Uninsured patients qualifying for prenatal care under the indigent program at the clinic are charged a $360 fee, which is paid in installments for the duration of the pregnancy and must be paid in full by delivery time. This is the only fee incurred by the

pregnant mothers covered by the indigent program. Childbirth takes place in Las Cruces at one of the two hospitals mentioned previously.

The Promotora Program consists mostly of volunteers who go out into the community to assess needs and find patients the resources they need to improve their quality of life. This program is also available in Chaparral and Anthony New Mexico (LCDF Patient Handbook, 2005).

There are seven clinics in the area operated by the city of Las Cruces. One is in Gadsden High School, which is opened Tuesdays and Thursdays, and a second in Santa Teresa High School, which is opened Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. They are satellite clinics and provide basic care, for example the common cold, as well as vaccinations and physical examinations for high school athletic programs. Gadsden High School also provides contraceptives upon request. This program is in the approval process for Santa Teresa High School and will soon be available to students upon request. Anthony and Las Cruces have clinics that are opened on Saturdays.

Santa Teresa Medical Care Center is located at 5055 McNutt Road, in Santa Teresa, New Mexico. This facility provides preventive health education, internal medicine, and regular patient services. According to Patsy Gutierrez, the clinic manager the agency accepts private insurance, Medicaid and Medicare (Personal Communication, March 2005).

Santa Teresa Immediate Care Center is a basic care facility that accepts Medicaid and Medicare, as well as private insurance. There are no optometrists within the city of Sunland Park, however there is one in Santa Teresa. The residents can also go to El Paso or Las Cruces, for private pay facilities. The Lions Club has a donation program for used eyeglasses. For serious eye care emergencies or to see an ophthalmologist, patients must go to a Las Cruces. If they choose to go to a hospital in El Paso, patients must be aware they may be responsible for all fees incurred.

According to Mabel Valenzuela, the ***New Mexico Department of Public Health*** provides immunizations free of charge to underserved and hard to reach children ages 0-18 (Personal Communication, February 28, 2005). Disease prevention, family planning, tuberculosis screening, sexually transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS screening are offered at no cost. The WIC Program (Women, Infants and Children) is also offered though the

Public Health Department. They provide supplemental food, nutrition education, and breastfeeding counseling. All these programs are either provided on a sliding scale fee or are free to eligible persons.

For ***emergency medical care***, the clinic doctors provide services at Memorial Medical Center and Mountain View Regional Medical Center located in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Las Palmas Medical Center and Providence Memorial Hospital are in El Paso, Texas. According to Rosa Garcia, Admissions Supervisor at Las Palmas, their hospital will only accept New Mexico Medicaid recipients who are part of the Lovelace or Presbyterian network in New Mexico (Personal Communication, April 2005). According to Terry Balderrana, Admissions Director of Providence Memorial, their hospital will only accept New Mexico Medicaid recipients who are part of the Molina network in New Mexico (Personal Communication, April 2005).

Dental and Optical Services

La Clinica de Familia also provides dental services to the community of Sunland Park. The clinic is the only dental clinic in the Sunland Park area. They provide services to children, adolescents and adults. Dental services provided are emergency dental care, basic cleaning and hygiene care, and preventive dental care. Patients are seen by appointments only, except in emergencies. Patients may apply for a discount rate on a sliding scale fee, if they have no other source of payment. Income and number of household member's determine discount amount. Payments will be 25%, 50% or 75% of total charges for each visit (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005). Patients seeking services need to bring their insurance or Medicaid card, financial information if applying for the discount program, and arrive 15 minutes before the first appointment (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005).

La Clinica de Familia also provides basic vision screening for children, adolescents and adults. If a problem is detected, the attending physician will refer the patient to an outside agency, either in El Paso, Texas or Las Cruces, New Mexico depending on the patient's needs.

Santa Teresa Medical Care Center provides vision screening. According to Patsy Gutierrez, Clinic Manager, the center accepts private insurance and will only accept New

Mexico Medicaid if the primary care physician (PCP) is Dr. Alfred Varela (Personal Communication, March 2005).

Southwest Eye Clinic is located at 1240 Country Club Road Suite B, in Santa Teresa, New Mexico. According to Marleen Wilson, Office Manager, the eye specialists at Southwest Eye Clinic provide comprehensive eye examinations and routine eye care for both children and adults (Personal Communication, March 2005).

Mental Health Services

There are several agencies providing mental health services to the Sunland Park community. These providers consist of formal and informal agencies. The formal agencies are The Peak Psychiatric Hospital and Southern New Mexico Human Development.

The Peak Psychiatric Hospital, located in nearby Santa Teresa, is a privately owned 36-bed hospital providing inpatient mental health services to children, adolescents, adults and seniors. These services include; evaluation and diagnosis, medication, individual, family, and group therapy, psycho-educational experiences, and activity therapies (art, music, and recreation). The types of treatment are determined by the individual's diagnosis (The Peak brochure, 2005). According to Nick Flores, Program Director of the Substance Abuse Program, at the present time, the Peak is in the process of adding a 12-bed geriatric unit (Personal Communication, February 21, 2005).

The Peak Hospital also offers a Chemical Dependency Program, which addresses the physical, psychological, and social components of Addictive disease. The treatment involves three separate phases: 1) observation and detoxification, 2) primary inpatient treatment, and 3) continuing care. According to Mr. Flores, for long-term care, The Peak refers clients to either Southern New Mexico Human Development in Anthony, New Mexico, Southwest Counseling Center in Las Cruces, New Mexico, or Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MHMR) in El Paso, Texas (Personal Communication, February 21, 2005).

According to Amy Graham, Assistant Director of Nursing, The Peak employs ten licensed Master level social workers that provide therapy, four licensed chemical dependency counselors (LCDC), one medical doctor, and three psychiatrists, one of

which is a child psychiatrist (Personal Communication, April 26, 2005). The Peak accepts private insurance, Medicaid/Medicare, and self-pay for services.

The Southern New Mexico Human Development (SNMHD) main office is located in Anthony, NM and has a satellite office in Sunland Park. SNMHD is a non-profit agency that provides outpatient behavioral health services for Dona Ana County. These services include: psychiatric services, medications, case management services, individual, family, and group counseling, substance abuse programs, crisis intervention, and education and prevention programs. A Psychosocial Rehabilitation program for individuals with severely disabling mental illness is also available (SNMHD, 2005). Services are offered in English and Spanish.

Counselors are placed on site at the middle schools and high schools in the Gadsden district for adolescents and teens experiencing problems. The Behavior Management Team works with children who are having behavior problems. The team works in the classroom with the teacher and in the home with the parents. There is one psychiatrist on staff twice a week that provides assessments and diagnosis of mental disorders and prescribes psychotropic medication for individuals with a diagnosed mental illness. According to Elva Briceno, Case Manager Supervisor at SNMHD, social workers and other qualified personnel provide case management services including: medication monitoring, advocacy, linking and coordination of services with other agencies, and referrals (Personal Communication, April 12, 2005).

SNMHD has a prevention team that provides educational presentations and workshops in the area. Outreach and crisis intervention is also offered. While most of these services are offered out of the main office in Anthony, there are case managers and therapists that visit the Sunland Park location several times a week to provide services to clients. A Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program (PSR) is available for severely disabled mentally ill (SDMI) adults. This is a day program in which clients are educated on mental health issues, taught daily living skills, and social and problem-solving skills, in an effort to promote self-reliance, independence, and ultimately integration into the community. These PSR services are offered at both locations.

According to Nancy Tinajero, scheduling staff for SNMHD, the waiting list for services can be approximately two weeks, depending on what services are needed

(Personal Communication, March 31, 2005). SNMHD accepts private insurance, Medicaid, and self-pay. Transportation is available for residents through companies, such as Safe-Ride, American Transportation, and Ben Archer for a small fee. SNMHD offers services for undocumented individuals but they are limited. Undocumented clients may have access to treatment but cannot receive coverage for prescription medication.

The ***informal providers*** of mental health services in Sunland Park consist of churches and support groups. For example, San Martin de Porras Catholic Church, like many other churches in the immediate are offers counseling services for their parishioners. In these churches, the focus is on marital counseling. According to Mabel Valenzulea, a nutritionist with the Public Health Department, La Casa, a family violence shelter located in Anthony, has a staff member who travels to the Sunland Park Public Health facility to provide counseling to residents that are unable to travel (Personal Communication, February 21, 2005). Alcoholics Anonymous has meetings available for residents at various days and times during the week. These services are all free of charge and are provided in English and Spanish.

There is some speculation that La Clinica de Familia is planning to incoporate behavioral health into their clinics. According to Ernest Molina, a social worker at SNMHD, La Clinica is going to be hiring their own psychiatrist, therapists, and case managers instead of referring out to other providers (Personal Communication, April 26, 2005). But according to an anonymous employee at La Clinica, the clinic is looking at a Depression Collaborative to be headed by Dr. Lotta Robledo and run out of the clinic, but is unaware of any hiring of the necessary mental health professionals in the near future (Personal Communication, April 26, 2005). Private therapy and case management is available through Positive Solutions, run by Deborah Evanstad, LMSW. Currently the office in Santa Teresa has been closed and is scheduled to open in Anthony in July 2005. According to Angie Meza, the office manager, they will be referring current clients elsewhere for service when Ms. Evanstad retires (Personal Communication, April 14, 2005).

Regarding the veteran's mental health services and the homeless, the above agencies provided crisis intervention. According to Mr. Flores, veterans are referred to

the Veterans Administration for long-term care and the homeless to the Rescue Mission, which has a waiting list (Personal Communication, February 21, 2005).

Promotoras de Salud (Health Promotors)

The role of the promotoras in the community is to advocate, educate, and provide information to Sunland Park residents. According to Margarita Jaquez, the promotoras are the bridge between the resources and the community (Personal Communication, April 8, 2005). The promotoras services are an essential component of the semi-formal helping network for the community. The promotoras main function or role is to assist the residents to utilize the resources available. The promotoras strive to enable the residents to become self-sufficient through education. Through education, the promotoras provide information to community members regarding access to services available.

Ms. Sylvia Sapien is recognized as the first promotora in Sunland Park and is the Director of the Promotoras Program sponsored by La Clinica de Familia. The Center for the Promotoras Program is located in Anthony New Mexico. Some of the promotoras receives some type of salary or stipend, while other promotoras volunteer their time to help the residents of Sunland Park. Any promotora is recognized in the community as part of the semi-formal helping network of a community. Several residents of Sunland Park expressed their gratitude to the promotoras because they work long hours to assist people in need. The promotoras are a vital means of communication between the agencies and the community. However, the main function of the promotoras is to educate the community and to encourage the residents to access the services available to them and to advocate for themselves.

At ***La Casita de Anapra*** a grassroots community center, the promotora functions are carried out by two AmeriCorp Vista, Project Vida volunteers. These volunteers work only with the community of Anapra. Their functions are complex and diverse. The volunteers promote education on the dangers of drugs and use among the adolescent population. They provide educational sessions for teens and parents on drugs, the warning signs of drug involvement, and the importance of communication between adolescents and parents. The volunteers at La Casita also put together a GED program in English and Spanish for parents during the morning hours while their children are at school. Through donations, La Casita de Anapra pays the test fee for the GED at Sunland

Park Community College, Dona Ana Branch. La Casita has a small grant from the New Mexico Department of Education, which pays $5.50 per hour to students to obtain their GED. The maximum hours covered are 180. The students receive special training on how to prepare a resume and how to present themselves in a job interview. This program serves high school dropout students ages 14 to 21 years.

Another important task is to assist parents with young children in need of after school programming. The children receive tutoring for school subjects, computer education and access to Internet services to complete school homework and/or research for their school subjects. La Casita has a small library available for the residents of Anapra. Transportation is provided by the volunteers for the children and youth that attend the after school activities. This program requires the parents' permission. According to Olga Arguelles, La Casita provides snacks for the children and youth that attend the activities after school (Personal Communication, February 21, 2005).

The volunteers are also in charge of the coordination of the Food Bank paperwork and are responsible for updating information of the food bank recipients. This activity is only for Anapra residents. The food baskets are distributed by the Community Action Agency of the Southwest located in Las Cruces.

La Casita has a Planting Program that teaches participants how to design and care for small vegetable gardens. It was originally designed for mothers attending the activities at La Casita, but the children were so interested in the project that it is now the children's project. Mr. Moore, a retired lawyer who volunteers in La Casita activities, funded this project. In addition, the volunteers have a Christmas "Toy Give Away." This project is done through donations from private organizations, as well as Department stores, such as Wal-Mart, Toys R Us, Target, and Walgreens. The volunteers have coordinated the provision of school meals from the Gadsden Independent School District (GISD) for the children during the summer session, which La Casita distributes to the children in the summer programs aimed at improving educational outcomes.

La Casita has a newsletter to inform the community of new events and the outcomes of the regular projects. The residents of Anapra receive a special grant through HUD for lower prices on natural gas and another special grant to improve their homes.

According to Lilia Ureno, La Casita receives local and federal funds, as well as assistance from the Presbyterian Church (Personal Communication, February 28, 2005).

La Clinica de Familia also sponsors a Promotoras Program. The program office is located in Anthony, New Mexico. There are two promotoras assigned to work with the patients of La Clinica de Familia: one promotora works only with Prenatal Care and the Diabetes Education and the other promotora works with referrals for food stamps, Medicaid, application for disability, and follow-up with patients that missed the doctor's appointments. In addition, the promotoras are responsible to report any suspected abuse and/or neglect on children and adults. According to Teresa Herrera, the Prenatal Care promotora, the clinic has a social worker and she works only with referrals from the promotoras and the clinic staff, as well as referrals from social workers within the GISD (Personal Communication, April 8, 2005). At times it is difficult for the clinic staff, promotoras, and the social workers to follow-up on some cases. Some patients leave the community, then return several weeks or months later to continue their treatment at the clinic. According to Ms. Jaquez, this program receives federal, state, and local funds (Personal Communication, April 8, 2005).

Hacienda del Sol is a program that has one promotora in Sunland Park. The program helps residents to pay their rent and only serves Sunland Park. The program also helps the residents with electricity bills. The only requirement to receive the assistance is the resident must have either an eviction or a termination notice. The resident must have some type of proof of income and the last receipt of rent and/or the utility bill. Recipients must show any statements of benefits received from food stamps and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The promotora assesses the particular situation of every client and their needs. The main office for the entire organization is located in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The promotora in Sunland Park is currently working from her home and the program is trying to secure an office in Sunland Park. According to Magdalena Loya, a promotora of Hacienda del Sol, this program receives federal and state funds (Personal Communication, April 9, 2005).

The Southern Area Health Education Center (SoAHEC) Coordinated by Adriana Corona MBA/HCA focuses on educating the population of border communities about asthma and allergies in children, lead in the home, fire safety, gas safety, electrical

safety, food safety and the use of hazardous chemicals in the home. Promotoras with SoAHEC visit the community upon request. SoAHEC promotoras present to groups and organizations, and they will also make home visits. Referrals from agencies or self-referrals are the primary mechanisms through which home visits are scheduled (Adriana Corona, Personal Communication, May 19, 2005).

The Child and Family Development Department of Sunland Park has two promotoras, one promotora works with the parents of young children from birth to 5 years of age and the second promotora educates parents in the different stages of childhood development and parenting skills. The promotoras present special topics to parents, such as nutrition and diet, health and vaccinations, and the importance of parent involvement in tracking the development of their children. In addition, the promotoras refer parents to outside services depending on the needs of the children, parents, and the family. Common referrals are for Medicaid and food stamps. Most children are referred to La Clinica de Familia for medical services. The promotoras educate parents regarding services available in the community. The promotoras encourage parents to participate in programs that will benefit the entire family. The promotoras also educate the parents in concepts of childhood cognitive development because parents need to learn the importance and benefits of Head Start for the children. The promotoras participate in different activities with the purpose of outreach to residents in the community. According to Director Diana Tellez, the criteria for services are the age of the children, from birth to 5 years of age, and the family income, $24,000 or less annually for a family of four (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). The program receives funding from the state through the Children, Youth, and Families Department.

Human Services

Public Housing Assistance

Public Housing Department is located at 4420 McNutt Road. They provide homes for families and senior citizens. According to Lilia Moreno, Public Housing Manager, there are 40 homes that have one to four bedrooms (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005). In order to be eligible for public housing, the person must apply and will be put on a waiting list. The waiting time for a four bedroom home is six months to one year, a three bedroom home is one to two years, and for a one or two bedroom home the wait is

as long as five years. Eligibility depends on the person's total household income. The average monthly rent is $150, which depends on the total household income. On average, Public Housing receives about 15 applications a week from Sunland Park residents, as well as from the El Paso, Socorro and San Elizario, Texas areas.

Employment Assistance

The New Mexico Department of Labor has several One-Stop Career Centers located throughout the state. The main office for Dona Ana County is in Las Cruces; and Sunland Park has a sub-office that is located at 141 Quinella, which is open on Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9 AM - 4 PM from October to mid-March and 9AM - 1PM during April to September. In order for a person to receive services, they must have a social security number. This state agency assists mostly those individuals who have worked in the farming and harvesting community of Sunland Park and its surrounding areas. Approximately 95% of the unemployed people that come for help are non-English speaking agricultural workers. From October through mid-March, laid-off workers come in for assistance and in the fall the agency sees approximately 100 to 200 applicants a day. From April through September is a slow season, as many have agricultural jobs in the surrounding area and during this time the agency sees approximately 10 to 15 applicants a day. The services this agency provides include: unemployment insurance, employment placement, employment counseling, and special services for veterans. Veterans are seen by appointment because there is a special representative that works with these applicants and veterans receive preference on the job orders.

Another One-Stop Career sub-office is located 2660 Airport Road, Suite #800 and are open on Thursdays only from 8AM – 5 PM. According to Leticia Santillan, an employment representative, this agency is different because it is in partnership with the Dona Ana Community College and can offer GED, ESL, and citizenship classes to their applicants (Personal Communication, April 20, 2005).

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)/New Mexico Works (NM Works)

Federal legislation contained in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 abolished the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. This federal act created the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). The overall objective of TANF is to assist families with dependent

children to meet transitional financial need and to help these families become self-sufficient. TANF provides mostly single-parent families time-limited transitional cash assistance, usually a term limit of 60 months. If an adult received TANF from another state, that time also counts towards the term limit in New Mexico. Currently, under New Mexico TANF requirements, a single parent must work 34 hours per week. Most adults receiving cash assistance are required to participate in NM Works.

Through the New Mexico Works Act of 1998, the New Mexico Works (NM Works) program, a state-funded TANF replacement program, was created. The goal of the NM Works program is to improve the quality of life for families by increasing family income, assisting parents to develop the discipline necessary for self-sufficiency, and to improve their self-esteem. The secondary goal is to increase family income through family employment and child support and by viewing financial assistance as a support service to enable and assist parents to participate in employment. NM Works provides education, job training, and other services leading to employment.

In order to receive TANF/NM Works, the parent(s) of the children may have to participate with some type of work program, school, or voluntary work. Services under this program include: job referrals/job search, employment counseling, work skills training, job interviewing skills and resume development, assistance in obtaining child care and transportation to a job or education program, family counseling, GED, and volunteer work. Some of the volunteer work is done at DHS or other state offices. The Department of Human Services (DHS) office is located at 220 Crossett Lane, Anthony, New Mexico, and is open from 8 AM – 5 PM.

To qualify for TANF/NM Works a person(s) must: 1) live in New Mexico, 2) have a family income and resources below a certain dollar amount, 3) have at least one dependent child, 4) have a child 17 years or younger, or age 18 and a full-time student graduating by age 19, and 5) be a US citizen or non-citizen with qualified, legal resident status. The application may be used for other types of assistance as well. According to Helen Salgado, Family Assistance Analyst Supervisor with DHS, in Sunland Park, La Clinica de la Familia has an Onsite Application Assistant and feels that a sub-office at Sunland Park is needed, because of the large number of applicants from Sunland Park (Personal Communication, April 15, 2005).

Food Stamps

The Food Stamp Program helps many households buy the food they need. Families receive monthly assistance to purchase food at grocery stores. Food stamps are for all qualified individuals, including senior citizens. To qualify for food stamps you must; 1) live in the New Mexico, 2) be a US citizen or non-citizen with qualified, legal resident status, 3) have proper identification, and 4) have a family income below a certain dollar amount.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) distributes United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) commodities to communities throughout the state. Eligible households can receive canned fruits and vegetables, meats, juices, and other grocery items every month.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

WIC provides supplemental food for women, infants, and children, along with nutrition education, information on breastfeeding and referrals to health and social programs. It is a federal program administered by the US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, and the New Mexico Department of Health, Family Health Bureau. To qualify for WIC you must; 1) be a resident of New Mexico, 2) be a pregnant, breastfeeding or postpartum woman, with an infant under one year of age or a child under five years of age, 3) meet income guidelines, and/or 4) have a nutrition related health risk. The WIC office is located at Sunland Park, New Mexico Department of Public Health at 3807 McNutt Road and is open Monday to Friday from 8 AM – 12 PM (Noon) and 1 PM – 5 PM. Applicants are seen by appointment and need to bring the following: proof of residency, proof of identity, checks stubs for past 30 days or a letter from employer for any member of your family who receives income, or other proof of income status, which includes TANF or Food Stamps award notice or Medicaid card, knowledge of what the applicant has eaten during the past seven days, and a current or updated immunization record (NMDH, Family Health Bureau, 2005). According to Blanca Urrutia and Christina Rodriquez, employees from the Department of Public Health in Sunland Park, there are currently 1,400 applicants registered for the WIC program from the Sunland Park and Santa Teresa area (Personal Communication, February 14, 2005).

Medicaid

The Medicaid program pays for health care service from doctors who accept New Mexico Medicaid. To qualify for Medicaid you must be: 1) a low income family, 2) women who are pregnant or need family planning services, 3) elderly, blind, or disabled who receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI), 4) low income Medicare beneficiaries, 5) a person who needs nursing home care.

Senior Services

La Clinica de Familia and the ***Public Health Center***, both located on McNutt Road, offer services to the community. However, these programs do not specifically have specialty units that cater to senior citizens. The Peak Psychiatric Hospital has a new twelve-bed geriatric unit that serves Sunland Park and surrounding areas. This clinic features a ten-day crises intervention program, substance abuse, and a detoxification center. They accept private insurance, Medicaid/Medicare, and self-pay for services.

The Sunland Park Senior Center was built in 1998 through a community development block grant (CDBG) of $300,000; the local share was approximately $30,000 or ten percent of the share. The center, located at 3800 McNutt Road, is open from 10 AM – 2 PM, Mondays through Fridays. The center provides many necessary services to individuals 60 years of age and over within the community of Sunland Park. Some of the services include: Congregate Meal Program, providing transportation to and from the center with the vans, recreation, Meals-on-Wheels for individuals 60 years and over, in-home respite care, homemaker services that provides light housekeeping services, health education and promotion, and health insurance education.

Funding for the programs comes mostly from state and federal sources. According to Nora Bailey, contract administrator for the city of Sunland Park, the center is managed through Quality Senior Services Inc. in Las Cruces (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005). There are two employees, a cook and a helper in the kitchen, who serve hot meals to the elderly for a minimal cost of $1.50. According to Rebecca Hernandez, the cook who also is the cashier and treasurer, quite a few of the seniors usually do not have the $1.50, but they are never turned away (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005).

According to the Community Development Department, the only ***senior housing complex*** unit is the Villa del Sol Apartments, located on Valle Vista Street. According to

Martha Rios, the Manager, there are 30 units and all are occupied and the wait for an available apartment is approximately two to three years. To qualify for an apartment you must: 1) be 62 years or older, 2) meet low income standards, 3) pass a criminal background check, and 4) have personal references. The rent is based on a sliding scale according to total income, but the average is 30% of the total rent. Out-of-pocket rent ranges anywhere from $27 to $220 per month for two individuals.

The complex has a recreation room, where seniors can make crafts, watch television, or play board games with other seniors. There are approximately eight senior residents that volunteer at the schools under the foster grandparent program. There are residents with disabilities living in the complex that require long-term care providers to come to their apartments to help them with their daily living activities. Ms. Rios stated that most of the providers come from within the Sunland Park area (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005).

In Sunland Park, ***transportation*** for seniors is very limited; the only public transportation is the El Paso Sun Metro Bus Route 83. According to Ms. Rios, she stated she had to advocate for a change in route to accommodate services to the senior apartments and for a bus bench outside the complex (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005). Seniors have the option of calling Safe Ride at 1-888-633-1002. Safe Ride is a service coordinated through an office in Las Cruces. Safe Ride will provide transportation free for seniors who also receive Medicaid. However, the service requires the caller to navigate a series of menu options. In addition, rides must be reserved by 3 PM for any provision of service the following day.

The ***Community Action Agency (CAA)*** of southern New Mexico operates a food pantry located in Sunland Park, which is located at a warehouse donated by and located at the San Martin de Porras Catholic Church. This pantry caters to senior citizens and families in the WIC program. To qualify CAA requires you must: 1) be age 60 years or over, 2) have a picture identification, 3) have a letter of social security benefits, SSI, pension, or retirement, and 4) have a utility bill with name and address, to prove residency within the community of Sunland Park. According to Adelmina Bennett, a worker with the program, the requirements above are only guidelines and that quite a few

participants usually do not have all the required paperwork, but that they are never turned away (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005).

Public Safety Resources

Sunland Park Police Department

The Sunland Park Police Department was incorporated in 1984. The department receives funding from three sources: the city of Sunland Park, a yearly grant of $30,600 from the Law Enforcement Protection Agency, and extra financing from the Drug Enforcement Agency for the use of office space, which comes through The Mesilla Valley Dispatch Authority. The department also receives a small amount of funding from DWI (driving while intoxicated) Program and Seatbelt Awareness Program participation.

The department consists of 23 certified officers. There are 15 patrol officers, three sergeants, two criminal investigators, one lieutenant, one captain, and one police chief. There is also a volunteer reserve program consisting of 12 uncertified officers. In order to maintain reserve status, the reserve officers must work at least 20 hours per month. There are two reserve officers and one supervisor per shift. The Dona Ana County Domestic Violence Volunteers also fall under the jurisdiction of the Sunland Park Police Department. All domestic violence calls are referred to a female volunteer within that group.

The police station operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and receives approximately 400 calls per month. The call center, which has three dispatchers, is located in the police station and works in conjunction with the Sunland Park Fire Department and the emergency service ambulance (First Response). The Sunland Park Police Department jurisdiction covers all of Sunland Park, which includes the areas of the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino and the business sector of Santa Teresa. The police department has jurisdiction in Dona Ana County and has a co-operative agreement with the Sheriff's Department located in Las Cruces. The Sunland Park Police Department also assists the Border Patrol and the State Patrol when there is a shortage of manpower.

According to Police Chief Charles Anderson, employees are recruited first by the in house reserve program and then by advertising in local newspapers, such as the El Paso Times and the Las Cruces Sun News (Personal Communication, February 14, 2005). To qualify for the police department a recruit must: 1) be 21 years old, 2) be a US

citizen, and 3) have no criminal history. Training for the department is at the Police Academy in Santa Fe, New Mexico and is paid training. Officers are also required by New Mexico state law to complete 800 hours of extra training in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. The Sunland Park Police Department pays $8.00 per hour for uncertified officers and $10.00 per hour for certified police officers. Officers are allowed to engage in additional employment to supplement their income. Uncertified officers must become certified within one year or are no longer eligible to be employed as officers. The Dona Ana County Sheriffs Department pays $14.00 per hour for certified officers and as a result many of the Sunland Park officers use the training and experience they receive with the Sunland Park Police Department and transfer out to either the Dona Ana Sheriffs Department or El Paso Police Department.

According to the 2004 Police Department Crime Statistics Report, the five major crime areas are: domestic violence, larceny, burglary, battery, and assault. There is a difference of opinion between community members and the police department regarding the crime areas and reports of crime, as some community members feel the police department does not put enough emphasis on certain problems, such as gang activity and reports of child abuse within the community. Although there are two officers on special assignment with a gang task force, residents of Meadow Vista feel gang activity is especially prevalent in their area and wish more could be done to curb this activity, especially gang related tagging.

Sunland Park Fire Department and First Response

According to Fire Chief Robert Monsivaiz, the Sunland Park Fire Department was established in 1966 (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005). The City of Sunland Park and a state fire protection grant of $53,000 fund the Sunland Park Fire Department. They collaborate with Dona Ana County for services. The department consists of fourteen full time and ten volunteer fire fighters between two separate manned stations. There is one full time female fire fighter and one female volunteer firefighter. There are three fire stations, two manned stations in Sunland Park and one equipment station in the Santa Teresa area. The fire department has two apparatus trucks (hook and ladder), one HAZMAT (hazardous material) unit, one command vehicle, and one fire rescue unit. According to Chief Monsivaiz, the fire department serves the Sunland Park area, from

Anapra to Airport Road, north of Country Club Road (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005).

Fire fighters are recruited through El Paso Community College (EPCC), community flyers, and local newspapers, such as the El Paso Times and the Las Cruces Sun News. Calls are routed through the Sunland Park Police Department Call Center. Most recruits come from the EPCC certification program, which takes six months to complete. The recruit must have this completed certification program before being hired by the Sunland Park Fire Department. They then must complete an additional four-month, unpaid training at the third fire station in Santa Teresa. Chief Monsivaiz is a fire fighter trainer at EPCC. Sunland Park Fire Department fire fighters are paid $22,776 per year and this salary is $6,000 less than the fire fighters salary in El Paso. According to Chief Monsivaiz, the fire department is also most often a "jumping off place" for fire fighters to train, get experience, and move on to a more lucrative market (Personal Commnication, April 4, 2005).

The fire department also oversees the emergency medical technician (EMT) services, First Response, which covers the same geographical area as the fire department. There is one ambulance housed at the Santa Teresa fire station. In emergency situations, when Las Cruces needs more ambulance service, the ambulance at Anthony is pulled and then the Sunland Park ambulance must be pulled to cover the Anthony area. According to Chief Monsivaiz, this has only been a problem twice when there was no ambulance to answer Sunland Park calls (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005).

All firefighters are trained and certified for EMT services and HAZMAT, as well. The EMT training is done at the Dona Ana Branch of EPCC. The training is unpaid and lasts for one full semester. In an emergency situation, the patient chooses where they will be taken, to either Memorial Hospital in Las Cruces or to Thomason Hospital in El Paso. The exception is for patients who are indigent, as they do not qualify for services outside of New Mexico, unless it is a life-threatening situation. If the emergency is a suicide attempt or drug overdose, the patient is automatically taken to Las Cruces.

Religious Resources

In Sunland Park, almost all of the churches are located along the main road, McNutt Road; with only one located in a different area. The following is a list of the churches in Sunland Park:

- Victoria en Jesus Cristo Templo
- Salon del Reino de los Testigos de Jehová
- San Martin de Porres
- Primera Iglesia Bautista
- Templo Cristiano Gavillas Doradas
- Iglesia Apostolica de la Fe en Cristo Jesús
- First Baptist Church of Chama

San Martin de Porres is the only Catholic Church in the Sunland Park community. Padre Ed Herrera Chavez heads the church and has been in this church for over 10 years (Sunland Park Community Assessment, 2002). Padre Ed is a very dedicated member of his community and has been a strong advocate for the residents in the community. According to Rocio Garcia, the church secretary, Padre Ed's schedule has grown to be very busy; as he is very often sought by community members, but by community members in El Paso and Juarez. Padre Ed offers free counseling services for individuals and families, and marriage counseling as well. Ms. Garcia stated that approximately 250 members of the community attend the various masses at one time or another (Personal Communication, March 7, 2005).

Another important church is ***Victoria en Jesus Cristo Templo***. Pastor Jose Perez heads Victoria en Jesus Cristo and has been a pastor for a little over 20 years. The church is an important resource to the community as it continues to sponsor a state approved halfway house, which houses approximately 20 males for as long as 90 days. Currently, they have approximately four clients receiving services. This halfway house is open to individuals who have violated probation or committed minor offenses. The church also works with Aliviane and the Opportunity Center in El Paso in helping to educate the community about sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. Victoria en Jesus Cristo also offers free anonymous HIV testing (Sunland Park Community Assessment, 2002). Maria Elena Perez, a member of the church, stated the church also works with Family Service Incorporated from Las Cruces. Family Service sends representatives to speak to individuals about various topics, including HIV and Hepatitis prevention; and also

informs individuals about available services, if they are diagnosed with either disease (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005). Finally, the church provides meals for the homeless; the meals are provided Monday through Wednesday at 12 noon. The church van picks up the homeless people in the area of the Opportunity Center and brings them to the church. Also, on the days they have church services, Wednesday and Friday at 7 PM and Sunday at 11 AM; they offer dinner after the weekly services and lunch after the Sunday service. Ms. Perez stated there are approximately 80 members in their church and, although the church offers very important services for the community, she wishes more people attended (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005).

Recreational Resources

The city of Sunland Park has three parks available to the public. They are Elena Memorial Park, River Levee Park, and Red Mender Park. According to Concha Medina, Project Manager for the Department of Public Works, "the parks of Sunland Park offer a clean and safe environment for family gatherings" (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005). The parks hold special events, such as Music Under the Stars, the lighting of the Christmas tree, and the Dieciseis de Septiembre (September 16th) Celebration. There are no restrictions or curfews for the park, but if residents want to organize large events, they must request permission through city hall. According to Ms. Medina, there are a few problems, which include fixing cracks on sidewalks and cleaning graffiti off walls, but the parks are cleaned and maintained daily by the parks division (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005).

Elena Memorial was the first park built in Sunland Park. According to Ms. Medina, it was built prior to the incorporation of the city (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005). This park is the largest in Sunland Park and has an adequate playground with a jungle gym, which includes a basketball court in good condition. There is a large open field in which the grass is nicely maintained. However, the grass at the edges of the park seems dry and could use some minor improvement. The park has quite a few benches, a large gazebo, bleachers, and a drinking fountain. This park also has a cement walkway around the perimeter of the park.

River Levee Park was built about six years ago and is located right next to the Rio Grande River, across from the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino. This park does not

have any fencing or walls between the park and river. This park has an adequate playground with a jungle gym, which includes several basketball courts in good condition. There are quite a few benches and grills around the park and a drinking fountain. There is a walking course, which has an advanced level circuit training/exercise obstacle course that one may or may not choose to use. There is a large field, with several trees, but are still small to provide adequate shade and large patches of dry dirt on this field. The quality of this field could be improved with more grass that is maintained.

Red Mender Park is the most recently renovated park and is in the Anapra community of Sunland Park. According to Ms. Medina, work on this park began early 2004 and the official grand opening for this park was March 2005 (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005). Although this was the grand opening, the park had been open and used by residents before this date. The park has basketball courts in good condition and a new playground, with a jungle gym. The grass is well kept all around the park and there is a baseball field and a soccer field with two goals for soccer games. There are quite a few benches, a picnic table, a gazebo, and a drinking fountain. This park also has lights.

According to Ms. Medina, there are future plans to build another park in the Riverside area and the city has been allocated $17,000 through the state for this project (Personal Communication, April 11, 2005). To date, the parks and recreation department is still waiting on additional funding and is looking for a site to build this park.

COMMUNITY SERVICES PROFILE – YOUTH SPECIFIC

The goal of this community services section is to provide resource information on the services available for the youth in the community of Sunland Park. The Community Services Profile – Youth Specific Section will include: 1) healthcare services, 2) mental health services, 3) education services, 4) youth gangs and gang territories, 5) gang intervention and prevention services, and 6) juvenile justice/juvenile probation and parole.

Healthcare Services –Youth Specific

La Clinica de Familia (LCDF) is located at 2625 McNutt Road in Sunland Park, New Mexico. La Clinica de Familia provides medical services for children, adolescents and adults. Some of the healthcare services provided by LCDF include: diagnosis and treatment, pediatric and adolescent care, immunizations, and physical examinations. The clinic offers support services, educational services and screening and referral for social services, such as TANF. Additional services available are the pharmacy and the laboratory (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005).

Educational services include the Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) and the Promotora Program. The Adolescent Family Life Program offers health related prenatal and parenting education for teen parents (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005). Youth services are free. The Promotora Program focuses on providing outreach services to meet the education and referral needs of families. There is no charge for their services. There are social service specialists available on-site to assist individuals with applications, referrals and other programs. Transportation referrals are made through the "Safe Ride" program. The Safe Ride program is available to provide non-emergency transportation to scheduled appointments for patients who are in the Medicaid program (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005).

Gadsden Independent School District (GISD) provides school-based health centers that help the youth with primary care, physical examinations, treatment, vaccinations, and referrals to physicians/agencies. La Clinica de Familia provides a school-based primary care medical site at Santa Teresa High School. Asthma and tobacco prevention health education is also provided at Santa Teresa High School (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005).

There are several other medical and health agencies that provide services for the youth in the Sunland Park area. ***The Children's Medical Services (CMS)*** located at 3807 McNutt Road in Sunland Park, New Mexico is a state agency that provides services for prevention, diagnosis, and treatment for disabling medical conditions in children (CMS pamphlet, 2005). This program is administered through the Department of Health, the Public Health Division, and Family Health Bureau (CMS pamphlet, 2005). Information provided by the agency states they serve children from birth to twenty-one, with chronic illnesses or medical conditions that require surgical or medical treatment and children and youth with conditions that limits their activity, such as diabetes, arthritis, and cleft lip/palate are eligible for the program (CMS pamphlet, 2005). CMS accepts Medicaid, New Mexikids, and most private insurance plans. The Healthier Kid's Fund is a new program that offers primary care services to children ages three to nineteen years of age that have no other payment source and meet eligibility requirements (CMS pamphlet, 2005).

Another agency is the ***New Mexico Department of Health (NMDH)*** located at 3807 McNutt Road in Sunland Park, New Mexico. The Department of Health provides clinical and preventive services for children ages birth to twenty-one. Their services include: disease prevention, immunizations, family planning, and screening for sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS. All services are confidential and offered free of charge or on a sliding scale fee based on income and household size. The screening for HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis are confidential and offered free of charge (NMDH, 2005).

Medicaid and New Mexikids

The New Mexico Department of Human Services (NMDHS) has expanded services to meet the challenges of the Sunland Park community. This system provides healthcare insurance for individuals throughout the state of New Mexico. The Medical Assistance Division (MAD) is responsible for direct administration of the Medicaid program. Medicaid is a state and federal program that provides health care insurance for individuals. Many doctors, hospitals, pharmacies, and other health care providers in Sunland Park, Las Cruces and Anthony accept Medicaid and New Mexikids insurance (NMDHSD, 2005).

Medicaid is under a managed care program called Salud. Recipients may obtain medical services from one of three Managed Care Organizations (MCO) under the Salud program: Molina, Lovelace or Presbyterian (NMDHS, 2005). Medicaid pays for regular check-ups, doctor visits, dental visits, hospital care, prescriptions, glasses, and hearing and vision exams. Other services may be covered if they are medically necessary. To qualify for Medicaid you must: 1) be a US citizen or a non-citizen with legal, resident status, 2) have proper identification, and 3) have a family income below a certain dollar amount (NMDHS, 2005).

New Mexikids is a healthcare insurance program provided by the New Mexico Department of Human Services. This health care coverage is for children nineteen years of age and younger. There may be no cost or a low cost to qualified families depending on the household income (NMDHS, 2005). Preventative services such as, Tot to Teen Health checks-ups and immunizations do not require a co-payment (NMDHS, 2005). New Mexikids pays for regular check-ups, doctor visits, dental visits, hospital care, prescriptions, glasses, and hearing and vision exams. Individuals applying for coverage of their children under New Mexikids must provide the following documents: 1) proof of last four income statements, if working, 2) children's social security numbers, 3) proof of any other health insurance, and 4) proof of children's age (NMDHSD, 2005).

Optical Services

Gadsden Independent School District provides a program called ***Sight for Students***. A collaborative partnership between Vision Service Plan (VSP) and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) continue to provide free eye care services to qualifying students whose family's income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (Sight for Students, 2005). Services include eye exams from one of VSP's participating doctors and glasses, if prescribed (Sight for Students, 2005). The school nurses will identify and refer students to the Sight for Students program. In order to qualify for services the family must meet certain criteria. Income may not be greater than 200% of the federal poverty level. The child must not eligible for Medicaid, must be enrolled in school, and the child must be 18 years or younger. The child or parent must be a U.S. citizen or documented immigrant with a social security number and the child must have not used this program in the last 12 months (Sight for Students, 2005).

Mental Health Services – Youth Specific

Mental health service providers for Sunland Park community residents include Southern New Mexico Human Development, Inc. (SNMHD), The Peak Hospital, The Pointe Residential Treatment Center, and Family Services Program. SNMHD and The Peak Hospital provide mental health services for both youth and adults. The Pointe Residential Treatment Center provides mental health services only to youth.

Southern New Mexico Human Development (SNMHD) provides professional mental health care to Anthony, New Mexico residents and the surrounding Dona Ana rural communities, including the Sunland Park area. According to Ernesto Molina, funding for this agency is procured at federal, state and local levels (Personal Communication, February 28, 2005). At SNMHD no one is turned away because of inability to pay. If funding for services cannot be located the client is placed on fee for service schedule based on a sliding scale (SNMHD, 2005). Mostly all clients at SNMHD are low income and fall under Medicaid or the Department of Health (Ernesto Molina, personal communication, 2005). SNMHD provides services in six main categories of mental health service, which are:

- Psychiatric intervention, two days per week
- Case management
- Psychosocial rehabilitation
- Behavioral Management and Skills Development Services (BMS)
- Prevention
- Coalition Community-Based services

Of these six categories three are geared to provide mental health service to youth in the elementary, middle, high school and community level. According to Fran Ogborn, these three categories are BMS, Prevention, and Coalition Community-Based services (Personal Communication, February 14, 2005).

Behavioral Management and Skills Development Service (BMS) services are designed to help children with mental health problems so severe that their functioning in school and community is markedly impaired and requires professional therapeutic intervention (SNMHD, 2005). The intention of the therapeutic intervention is to:

- Promote adequate behavioral skills
- Develop, restore, and maintain skills and behavior that result in a higher level of functioning

- Integrate and maintain the child in school, family, and community
- Improve behavioral or neurological disorders

The manner in which the BMS team executes these goals is by collaborating with teachers in the schools to serve targeted children. According to Maria Gama, the team is trained in providing educational guidance that promotes positive change (Personal Communication, April 26, 2005).

SNMHD has a *Prevention team* that is composed of a group of individuals trained in prevention strategies. This team provides the following services for youth at the elementary school, middle school, high school, and community level. Elementary services include: 1) concentrated efforts to reduce bullying, 2) comprehensive youth development, and 3) helping families and community foster healthy development of young adolescents (SNMHD, 2005).

The prevention team has been concentrating on eliminating bullying at the elementary school level. According to Ms. Ogborn, they have succeeded in reducing bullying by 34% (Personal Communication, February 14, 2005). Middle and high school services include: 1) uniting schools, family, and community to foster healthy development of young adolescents and 2) fostering of important life skills that lead to self-discipline, good judgment, and positive social skills (SNMHD, 2005).

The Strengthening Families Program is also integrated with the Prevention program. It is a community outreach program designed for two groups of youth. One group of youth ages 6-10 and their parents and another that consists of ages 10-14 and their parents. These two groups and parents meet with the prevention team at different times to focus on family bonding and problem solving together. According to Ms. Ogborn, they also focus on dealing with teen-age years and improving communication between adolescents and their parents (Personal Communication, February 14, 2005).

Additional work done by SNMHD in the area of mental health, youth and prevention is performed via *Coalition Community-Based Programs* with other entities such as: Rural Organization Project Entity (ROPE), Border Initiative Grant (BIG), Creer y Lograr (Believe and Suceed), Project Avanzar (Project Advance), and Regional Alcohol and Drug Awareness Resource (RADAR) (SNMHD, 2005).

Social work field practicum students from the University of Texas at El Paso placed at Sunland Park for their internships noted that there is a high turnover of employees. In speaking to some staff, it was found that approximately 28 employees have resigned over the past 12 months. It appears the high turnover of staff has led to an overload of cases for the remaining case managers and therapists. This has also affected clients. Interviews with agency clients revealed that several had not been able to see a therapist for a period of months.

The Peak Hospital, located in Santa Teresa provides mental health services to youth. The hospital has an in-patient hospital with a 36-bed capacity, of which 24 are for children and adolescents and 12 are for adults. Peak Hospital is a short-term treatment facility that staffs a psychiatrist, physician, and support staff. According to Nick Flores, clients procuring services must have a health plan provider, and the hospital operates on a fee for service basis and does not have a sliding scale provision for services (Personal Communication, April 6, 2005). Peak hospital provides the following services:

- Evaluation and diagnostic process and a treatment plan,
- Treatment components (medication, group therapy, family therapy, art, music, and recreation)
- Family treatment (family therapy addressing stressors and the establishment of proper family roles, goals, and perspectives)
- Education (education for children and adolescents through the GISD)
- Clinical dependency program (rehabilitation)
- Adventure programming (problem solving exercises and teamwork)

The Pointe Residential Center is affiliated with Peak Hospital. The Pointe Residential Treatment Center offers therapy to sexually aggressive males between the ages of 13-18 and operates in a closed and secure setting. According to Mr. Flores, it is an in-patient facility with 14 beds and the facility accepts Medicare and other funding sources, such as private insurance (Personal Communication, April 6, 2005). The Pointe Residential Center offers the following services:

- Individual, family, and group therapy
- Education through the GISD
- Psychiatric treatment
- Treatment for past sexual trauma
- Psycho educational intervention sessions for residents and family

Child and Family Development Department of Sunland Park

The Child and Family Development Department is located at 1000 McNutt Road in Sunland Park. The mission of the Child and Family Development Department is "to create an environment that will lead to the development of happy, healthy, productive families in Sunland Park" (Child and Family Development Department pamphlet, 2005). According to Diana Tellez, Director, the department works with individuals and families in the development of family advocacy, and community and family leadership, while assuring access to various services to assist families in their development (Personal Communication, April 2005). The services provided by Child and Family Development Department include:

- Parenting and Child Development Education
- Resource and Referral
- Early Childhood/Head Start Service Program
- Home Visiting Program
- Family Programs
    - Family Strengthening
    - Personal Growth
    - Family Nutrition
    - Health Issues
    - Basic Skills

The Child and Family Development Department is committed to working with individuals and organizations interested in the needs of children and families in the community and therefore, serve as a major source of information on the status of children and families within the community of Sunland Park. Ms. Tellez and her staff work to develop and acquire resources for the children and families of the community and work to continually develop partnerships to provide comprehensive services that will benefit families in the community (Child and Family Development Department pamphlet, 2005).

All programs developed and implemented strive to be culturally sensitive and language and age appropriate to all community residents of Sunland Park. The department works to enhance the capacity of families to support the growth and development of individual family members (Child and Family Development Department pamphlet, 2005). According to Ms. Tellez, the department strives to work with families based on equality and respect, and to affirm and strengthen families' cultural, racial, and linguistic identity (Personal Communication, April 2005).

The purpose the ***Sunland Park Early Childhood Learning Center*** is "to offer a warm, accepting atmosphere in which the child can grow emotionally, creatively, intellectually, and physically" (Child and Family Development Department Learning Center booklet, 2005). The Center focuses on meeting the needs of the child and on providing support to the families in the program and families in the surrounding community. According to the Learning Center booklet (2005), the objectives of the center include:

- To develop initiative and responsibility
- To develop an appreciation for home, school, and community
- To develop acceptance of self and others
- To understand and appreciate ones own culture and ethnic heritage and to share it with pride while learning to understand and appreciate people of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds
- To develop through creative play, music, and art
- To enrich the child's experience by providing group stimulation and participation while developing a degree of independence and self-confidence which is age appropriate
- To develop age appropriate motor skills through physical activity and the use of manipulative materials and toys
- To develop socially and emotionally while learning through the pleasure of giving and receiving and finding acceptable ways of solving problems
- To learn courteous and thoughtful behavior

According to Ms. Tellez, the Early Childhood Learning Center program admits all children four and five years of age, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or ancestry (Personal Communication, April 2005). In order for a child to be accepted into the program, either a parent or the primary caregiver, such as a grandparent, must enroll in the Avance Parent Education Training and attend the weekly trainings (Child and Family Development Department Learning Center booklet, 2005). Due to the limited space, children are enrolled based on the program criteria and placed on a waiting list until a space becomes available. The Learning Center is opened Monday through Thursday, with morning sessions from 8 AM – 11AM and afternoon sessions from 11 AM – 2 PM.

According to the Learning Center booklet (2005), the teachers develop a daily schedule, which provides opportunities for center activities, indoor and outdoor play, and

snacks. Teachers use positive guidance, re-direction, and the setting of clear limits so that the child learns how to become self-disciplined. Teachers are expected to model appropriate behavior and encourage children to be fair, to respect other people, and to be responsible for their actions. Parents are expected to follow guidelines and policies of the center and if they refuse, this may make them ineligible for program participation.

Education Services

Sunland Park and its residents are served by the Gadsden Independent School District (GISD). The GISD has 20 public schools in total, which not only serve the City of Sunland Park, but other surrounding communities. According to the New Mexico Public Education Department's 2004-2005 District Report Card, the GISD provides residents with two high schools, three middle schools, twelve elementary schools and three alternative schools and the total student enrollment is approximately 13,796 students. According to the Student Demographics Section, 95% of the students enrolled in the GISD are Hispanic and the other 5% is Caucasian (New Mexico Public Education Department, 2004-2005 District Report Card).

Sunland Park has three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The three elementary schools that serve the residents of Sunland Park are: Sunland Park Elementary, Desert View Elementary, and Riverside Elementary. The middle school and high school that serve Sunland Park residents are Santa Teresa Middle School and Santa Teresa High School (Dexter Katzman, Personal Communication, February 7, 2005).

Sunland Park Elementary School is located in the southern part of the community, near the Anapra area. The grades that Sunland Park Elementary School serves are Pre-kinder to 6th grade. Its total student enrollment is 521 students and the student per teacher ratio is approximately 14.8 to 1 (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The student economic level is represented by the percent of students that receive free or reduced-price lunch, which is 92% (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). Student ethnicity is almost 100% Hispanic and less than 1% White non-Hispanic (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The student attendance rate is 96.3% (GISD School Report Cards, 2002-2003).

Desert View Elementary School is located a couple of miles north of the Sunland Park Elementary School. It serves grades Kinder to 6th grade. Its current student

enrollment is 517 students and the student per teacher ration is approximately 14.7 to 1 (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The percentage of students receiving free or reduced-priced lunch is 99% (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). Student ethnicity is 99% Hispanic and 1% is White non-Hispanic (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The student attendance rate is 95.1% (GISD School Report Cards, 2002-2003).

Riverside Elementary School is located in the northern part of Sunland Park. It serves grades Pre-kinder to 6th grade. Its total student enrollment is 770 students and the student per teacher ratio is 18.2 to 1 (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The percentage of students that receive free or reduced-priced lunch is 96% (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). Student ethnicity is composed of 99% Hispanic and 1% White non-Hispanic (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The attendance rate is 96.4% (GISD School Report Cards, 2002-2003).

Santa Teresa Middle School is located in far north Sunland Park. This middle school serves 7th and 8th grades. Its student enrollment is 714 students and the student per teacher ration is 16.6 to 1 (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The percentage of students receiving free or reduced-priced lunch is 95% (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The student ethnicity is approximately 96% Hispanic, 4% White non-Hispanic, less than 1% African American, American Indian and Asian (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The school's dropout rate is 1.86% (GISD School Report Cards, 2002-2003).

Sunland Park has one high school that serves its community. This school is the ***Santa Teresa High School*** located in northern Santa Teresa. Santa Teresa High School serves 9th to 12th grades. Its total student population is 1,076 students (GISD School Report Cards, 2002-2003). The student per teacher ratio is approximately 16.8 to 1 (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). The percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch is 90% (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). Student ethnicity is 96% is Hispanic and 4% White non-Hispanic (GreatSchools, Inc., 2005). Santa Teresa High School's dropout rate is 4.71% (GISD School Report Cards, 2002-2003).

During an interview on February 7, 2005 with Dexter Katzman, the librarian at the Sunland Park Community Library, he stated that there are several options for a post secondary education within Dona Ana County. Residents of Sunland Park have the option to attend New Mexico State University (NMSU) or the University of Texas at El

Paso (UTEP), which are four-year institutions. He also stated that residents may also attend the Dona Ana Community College (DACC) or El Paso Community College (EPCC), which has several branches throughout the El Paso County. Other options for Sunland Park residents are private institutions like the University of Phoenix and the International Trucking School.

The three Sunland Park elementary schools offer the same basic academic and physical education to their students, as well as the same social services. Furthermore, the three elementary schools offer beneficial educational activities and services to the student's families, such as Math Night, Reading Night, and Science Night. According to Susan Yturralde, Principal at Desert View Elementary School, the purpose of these activities is to educate the parents on various topics so that they can help their children at home (Personal Communication, April 15, 2005).

All schools offer tutoring and a resource lab to identified students. Tutoring can be offered during school or after school. For those students that have been previously identified, summer school is also offered in addition to the traditional school year. According to Mr. Molina, school counselors work with the students and educate them in a wide variety of topics, such as drug prevention, career awareness, meditation, bullying, and peer pressure (Personal Communication, April 1, 2005). Elementary schools also offer a program called Character Counts, in which students are educated on various topics, such as trust, worthiness, respect, fairness, caring, and citizenship. According to Carmen Gutierrez, School Counselor at Sunland Park Elementary School, this program is supported by all schools personnel, from teachers to school principals (Personal Communication, April 15, 2005).

These schools also extend their educational services to their teachers, with special trainings for teachers in their schools for math and reading. According to Arthur Molina, Administrator Intern at Riverside Elementary School, these trainings are given every week by Process Trainers in each particular subject (Personal Communication, April 1, 2005).

In addition to basic academic and physical education, Santa Teresa Middle School and Santa Teresa High School offer extracurricular activities to their students, such as athletics, band, art, folklorico dancing, Drama Club, Student Council, National Jr. Honor

Society, Year Book Committee and various additional activities. According to Victor Montes, at Santa Teresa Middle School, they offer computer classes for the community and their library is open to the public (Personal Communication, April 4, 2005). According to Genevieve Chavez, Assistant Principal at Santa Teresa High School, they offer a wide variety of reading enrichment activities for the students and the community, such as Literacy Nights, Reading Fundamental Programs, and Community Reading Week (Personal Communication, April 8, 2005).

Social Services

All three elementary schools have one counselor and one nurse, the middle school has two counselors and one nurse, and the high school has one nurse and four counselors, of which three are regular counselors and one is a career counselor. School counselors and school nurses not only offer educational services to students, they also link students with social services. They work closely together with the school social worker to address any special need(s) the student or the student's family might have. Students with non-academic needs are referred to the counselor or school social worker.

All school social workers utilize the common core functions of case management. The overall mission of case management involves assisting persons in need by helping them access services designed to meet their needs (Coggins and Hatchett, 2002). After the school counselor refers the student to the social workers, the social worker first completes an assessment with the student, and if needed the family. After the assessment, they do the planning which includes the formulation of a service plan. Social workers also link the students and their families to the necessary services. According to Claudia Martin, MSSW, a social worker at Santa Teresa High School, social workers monitor the student and the family, and follow up to make sure that the services are adequate and appropriate (Personal Communication, April 18, 2005).

Under Title I, the Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs provides financial assistance through State educational agencies (SEAs) to local educational agencies (LEAs) and public schools with high numbers or percentages of poor children to help ensure that all children meet challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards. LEAs target the Title I funds to public schools with the highest percentage of children from low-income families. Through Title

I funds, schools offer a "targeted assistance program" which specifically targets children who are failing or most at-risk of failing to meet state performance standards. A consultation program, with parents, teachers, and school administration, then helps design an instructional program for the child. The targeted assistance program must not only be an effective means of improving student achievement, it must include strategies to support parental involvement, as well.

Title I Social Workers offer their services to every Title I student and their families. All the students in the Sunland Park area schools are considered Title I students. The offices for the elementary schools and the middle school Title I Social Workers are in the Gadsden Administrative Complex located on 4950 McNutt Road. Debbie Corona, LSBW is the social worker for Sunland Park Elementary and Desert View Elementary, Tina Jacquez Guillen, LBSW, is the social worker for Riverside Elementary and Aaron Salas is the social worker for Santa Teresa Middle School. Claudia Martin is the social worker for Santa Teresa High School and is the only social worker that has an office in the school of placement.

There are a total of seven social workers under the GISD Title I Federal Program, with the exception of Claudia Martin, who is funded by Family and Youth Resource Act. The GISD Special Education Federal Program funds a total of 14 Special Education Social Workers, who focus on special education students. According to Corina Valdespino, a social worker for GISD, Special Education Social Workers can also bill Medicaid for some of their services (Personal Communication, March 5, 2005). The Special Education Social Workers are Victor Cubiliette at Santa Teresa High School and Rossana Moulton at Santa Teresa Middle School and Desert View Elementary and Sunland Park Elementary Schools. Ms. Moulton's main office is at Santa Teresa Middle School. Isabel Gonzales is the Special Education Social Worker for Riverside Elementary School.

The district also has a Family Intervention Specialist, Jeanine Yanez. According to Yolanda Munoz, Lead Special Education Social Worker at GISD, Ms. Yanez specifically handles student attendance and links students with services needed to improve their attendance (Personal Communication, April 19, 2005). The district also has a Homeless and Migrant Liaison, Ray Lara, for this special population in the Sunland

Park area. According to Mr. Lara it is his job to identify and recruit homeless and migrant families and link them to other available services that they may need (Personal Communication, March 5, 2005).

The social workers collaborate with parents to enhance their children's academic success by optimizing the various resources of parents/students, schools and community with sensitivity to culture as ethnicity. Some of the services that are offered to the students and their families by school social workers are:

- Crisis prevention and intervention
- Home and school visits
- Information and referral
- Social developmental assessments
- Translation and advocacy for students' and parents' rights within the school system and the community
- Coordination of services
- Attendance at child study team meetings
- Explanation of district policies and procedures

According to the GISD Special Education Procedural Manual, special education services are determined on an individual basis by the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) Committee and are based on evaluation data presented to the committee that supports a need for special education services in order for a student to succeed in his or her current educational setting. Special Education Social Workers offer the following services:

- Preparing a social or developmental history on a child with a disability
- Providing individual counseling with the child and the family
- Working with problems in a child's home and school environment that affect the child's adjustment in school
- Mobilizing school and community resources to enable the child to learn as effectively as possible in his/her educational program
- Assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies

The GISD is moving in a new direction. Recently, two new social workers were added to serve the district. As a result, Santa Teresa High School has a full-time social worker dedicated completely to that school. According to Ms. Valdespino, LBSW, it would be very beneficial if every school had its own social worker. Not only would this

decrease the workload, but students and school staff would benefit tremendously if they had their own social worker housed in their particular school.

Youth Gangs and Gang Territories

According to the City of Sunland Park Police Department there are five major gangs that youth are involved in: the Anapra Homeboys, Meadow Vista 13, Misfits, Dukes, and Riverside Rockers. The Anapra Homeboys, located in the Anapra community, have about thirty members and appear to be the largest gang of the five. The Meadow Vista 13, located in Meadow Vista community, has several members ranging from elementary school to high school. The Misfits, are also within the Meadow Vista community, are attributed to being outsiders and having fewer members than the other four. The Dukes, in the Meadow Vista community near Santa Teresa Middle School, and the Riverside Rockers, in the Riverside community near Riverside Elementary School, are most prominent in the elementary and high schools. The gang territories are marked by graffiti on garbage dumpsters and buildings and the graffiti displays either the name of the gang or the signs with which they are associated.

There are two gang task force officers assigned by the Sunland Park Police Department to help minimize any gang activity or involvement. Interviews with police department employees and human services providers reveal that gang membership and activity have increased. The concern among law enforcement, juvenile justice, and human service providers is that increased gang activity will lead to drug trafficking and related violence among rival gangs. This concern is especially cogent given the location of Sunland Park along the border with Mexico.

The major drugs that Sunland Park Police face are narcotics, such as marijuana, cocaine, and heroin. According to Ms. Gamez, the majority of drugs seized are marijuana and cocaine, while heroin is not seen very often, but when police encounter heroin trafficking the amount of heroin seized is large (Personal Communication, February 14, 2005). Because Sunland Park is on the border of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, it makes this community an attractive spot to transport drugs from Mexico into the United States (Southwest Border High-Intensity Drug Traffic Areas [HIDTA] New Mexico Region, 2005). According to the Sunland Park Police Department, they average about one drug trafficking intervention, arrest, and seizure a month.

According to the HIDTA of the Office of National Drug Control Policy the following are statistical outputs from New Mexico HIDTA initiatives during Calendar Year (CY) 2001:

- Total Defendant Arrests: 3,430
- Drug Seizures:
  - Cocaine - 826 Kilograms
  - Heroin - 9.74 Kilograms
  - Marijuana- 114,350 Kilograms
  - Methamphetamine - 263 Kilograms
    - Methamphetamine Labs - 218
- Asset Seizures: $9,648,504
- Dismantled 90 Drug Organizations
- Disrupted 324 Drug Organizations

Together the Sunland Park Police Department and HIDTA are seizing many drugs and disrupting drug trafficking cartels in order to make the City of Sunland Park, New Mexico a safer place.

Gang Prevention and Intervention Services

Youth gangs are not a new phenomenon in the Sunland Park area. Many gangs are generational. There has been much attention directed towards gangs, in larger cities, such as El Paso. However, smaller communities such as Sunland Park are also faced with many challenges regarding gang activity. The presence and activities of youth gangs are a concern among parents, schools, communities, and the governor of New Mexico. The responsibility and challenge of working with youth who are at-risk must be shared by the parents, the schools, and the community. This portion of the community assessment will focus on several areas of gang prevention and intervention in the Sunland Park area, which include: 1) Gadsden Independent School District (GISD) prevention and intervention activities, 2) community resources, and 3) New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson's War on Gangs Initiatives.

Gadsden Independent School District (GISD) Prevention and Intervention

The Gadsden Independent School District (GISD), along with the community of Sunland Park and the state of New Mexico, currently has several programs related to gang prevention and intervention.

- Red Ribbon Week
- The D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program

- The Bully Prevention Program
- Mentoring and the Teen Truancy Court
- Crime Stopper Program (Santa Teresa High School only), rewards up to $100
- Parents/Students and the community of Sunland Park working together to form a partnership through outreach programs. For example, a public meeting held at the high school to educate the community on gang related issues.
- Security Resource Officers and strict dress code (uniforms in some schools)
- The Why Try Program

The Bully Prevention Program is a multi-level, school-based program designed to prevent or reduce bullying in the elementary, middle, and high schools. This program has been instrumental in recognizing the need for change and reinforcing positive, non-violent behaviors in students. According to Carmen Gutierrez, a counselor at Sunland Park Elementary School, to date, the program has a substantial reduction in reports of bullying and victimization in the schools (Personal Communication, April 15, 2005).

An important community meeting held at Santa Teresa High School on April 12, 2005 addressed "Gangs and Drugs." The speaker was Mr. Rafael Gallegos, Principal at Santa Teresa High School. Mr. Gallegos stated, within the school boundaries, "we haven't had a great deal of gang activity." Although gang activity within school boundaries is minimal, gang activity within the community does exist. Mr. Gallegos stated, one particular gang that has been around for over thirty years are the BMTs (Barrio Meadow Trece [13]), also known as VMT (Meadow Vista 13). This particular gang has promoted themselves from generation to generation.

Mr. Gallegos mentioned the staff and students enter into mediation whenever conflicts arise between suspected gang members. After allowing both sides to discuss the conflict, the students must sign a mutual agreement or contract that states they will not fight in school. This approach has been effective in reducing school-related gang activity on school grounds and provides a calm and safe environment for all students. School-based gang prevention and intervention programs are not limited to high-risk students but offered to all. School efforts are directed towards improving peer relations and making the school a safe and positive place for students to learn and develop. The key ingredients

in making these programs successful are forming a partnership between the educators, the parents, and the community.

Community Resources

The Sunland Park Police Department has two gang task force officers assigned specific duties related to gang intervention. Since October 2004, Officers Garcia and Soto have been assigned to respond to criminal activities and violations committed by juveniles in the Sunland Park area. Officer Soto was born and raised in the Anapra area of Sunland Park and states he is proud to serves his community (Personal Communication, April 5, 2005). According to Officers Garcia and Soto, the Sunland Park Police Department has responded to juvenile violence and gang activity by enforcing new ordinances, which include curfew laws and anti-loitering laws (Personal Communication, April 5, 2005).

One of the problems officers face within the community is the absence of trust between the police department and the community residents. The officers frequently go into the community and speak in schools and in public forums in order to build trust within the community. In speaking with several citizens in the Anapra area they reported that there is mistrust whenever officers patrol their neighborhood. The pervasive mistrust within Anapra is evident whenever one of these officers speaks to the youth in the neighborhood. Often the officers are surrounded by the residents asking them to leave the youth alone.

The City of Sunland Park and the Police Athletic League (PAL) Boxing Club opened the PAL gym, located at 126 Encino, to the youth in Sunland Park. PAL believes when properly coached and supervised, amateur boxing teaches self-discipline and builds self-esteem. It also can be used as a vehicle to instruct sportsmanship and values of conditioning a positive release of frustration and energy. PAL requires that volunteers must pass a police background check, be able to volunteer Mondays through Fridays from 4PM – 8 PM, and most importantly, want to work with children and families to make a difference in the community. To participate the youth must follow gym rules, several of which demand courtesy and respect to others in the gym, no cursing, no fighting outside the ring, and no gang paraphernalia or graffiti. The youth must also sign a waiver form and, if 18 years of age or under the parents must sign the waiver.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) provides leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and victimization. OJJDP supports the community through the judicial system that provides and protects the community and holds gang members accountable for their actions. According to Officers Garcia and Soto, this agency provides treatment and rehabilitation services tailored to meet the needs of juveniles and their families (Personal Communication, April 5, 2005).

The Promotora Program at La Clinica de Familia provides services for adolescents and families. The program provides a comprehensive family-focused program that focuses on prevention of domestic violence and crisis intervention (La Clinica de Familia handbook, 2005). The Prevention Program at Southern New Mexico Human Development, Inc. (SNMHD) focuses on high-risk teens, elementary school bullying, and important life skill techniques, which teach self-discipline, responsibility, and good judgment.

New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson's War on Gangs Initiatives

Governor Richardson is mobilizing state and community resources to reduce gang violence, in both the short and long term. According to Herman Silva, Drug/Gang Czar in the Office of the Governor for the State of New Mexico, the "Weed and Seed" plan includes using police agencies to "weed" out those responsible for gang violence in communities in crisis and to "seed" gang prevention programs throughout the state (Personal Communication, April 19, 2005).

This plan relies on community participation, with resources provided by the state. Several components within this plan:

<u>Legal Sanctions</u>

- The Governor will propose legislation, making it a crime to recruit gang members.
- The Governor will propose legislation to extend prison sentences for crimes committed on behalf of gangs.
- The Governor will encourage communities to pass and enforce local nuisance abatement laws, allowing them to shut down known gang hangouts.

The Governor will create a crisis-response team, mobilizing law enforcement agencies to "weed" gang violence problems out of communities in crisis (based on the Bernalillo collaborative model). Key components of the plan include:

Violence Intervention

- Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD) will provide intensive community supervision, including ankle bracelets, for gang-involved youth on probation or parole.
- Promote what is "already working" in New Mexico communities, such as the Taos Restorative Justice "Talking Circle" program.

Alternatives to Violence

- Promote alternatives to violence programs that already exist in our communities, such as:
  - The Boys and Girls Clubs of New Mexico
  - Youth Development, Inc. of Albuquerque.
- Use CYFD "Community Catalysts" to find youth employment/volunteer opportunities.

Community Mobilization

- Local police, schools, service agencies, and neighborhood groups must work in partnership with each other and the state.
- Governor Richardson orders the expansion of the GangNet database to strengthen community efforts.

Interagency Coordination

Representatives to the Children's Cabinet from CYFD, Department of Public Safety (DPS), Public Education Department (PED), Economic Development, Office of Cultural Affairs, Office of Indian Affairs, and the Drug/Gang Czar are charged with assuring the success of this initiative by:

- Opening channels of communication between agencies
- Coordinating and blending funding
- Defining collaborative policy and procedure

Juvenile Justice/Juvenile Probation and Parole

The Juvenile Justice Department is part of the New Mexico Department of Children, Youth, and Families (CYFD) (CYFD, 2005). Their mission is to enhance the safety, dignity, and the well being of children, youth, and families in New Mexico. The Juvenile Probation/Parole Office that serves the Sunland Park area is located in the Dona

County Court House in Las Cruces, New Mexico. This office follows the rules and regulations of the New Mexico Children's Code. Services are provided to adjudicated and non-adjudicated youth. Juvenile services range from court ordered probation to informal probation. A report from a law enforcement agency is required for a juvenile to be placed on formal probation. Once a juvenile is taken into custody, the Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer (JPPO) takes into consideration, the juvenile's prior record and the alleged offense. They then make a recommendation to the Children's Court Attorney. If the JPPO determines that the youth should be referred for adjudication, the youth may end up on formal probation. If the youth is not referred, the youth might end up on informal probation.

Types of Informal Probation

- *Consent Decree* – A juvenile placed on consent decree is placed on six months of probation without being adjudicated. After six months the case is dismissed, if no probation violation or additional offense has occurred.
- *Time Waiver* – If no further referrals are made during the determined time, the case is dismissed.
- *Pre-prosecution Diversion Program* – This program is similar to the Time Waiver. It is usually considered for nonviolent misdemeanor cases and first time offenders. If the program is completed successfully, and no additional offenses occur, the juvenile exits with a clean record.

Types of Formal Probation

- *Adjudicated Probation* – Adjudicated juveniles can be placed on probation for one or two years.
- *Electronic Monitoring* – Tracks the juvenile's movements and is used in conjunction with adjudicated probation. The most common form of such monitoring is known as the "ankle bracelet."

Assessment Process

According to Hugo Gomez, Supervisor at JPPO, evaluations can take up to 15 days and the Children's Court Attorney has the option of requesting a second opinion (Personal Communication, 2005). There are two clinical social workers available to complete the assessments. Assessments are also done by Families and Youth, Inc. (FYI), and Southwest Counseling Services.

Mental Health Treatment

Inpatient referrals are generally made to two local providers, Alliance and Mesilla Valley Hospital. Outpatient referrals are generally made to numerous agencies; some of which are Mesilla Valley Hospital, Southwest Counseling, Southern New Mexico Human Development (SNMHD), and the Adolescent Family Life Program.

Sex Offender Treatment

Juveniles adjudicated for sex-based offenses are usually referred to Desert Hills Treatment Facility in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Occasionally, juveniles are referred to Sandia Cottage at the Youth Diagnostic Development Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Juvenile Drug Court

The Juvenile Drug Court located in Las Cruces, New Mexico is a family intensive program that emphasizes personal accountability and immediate consequences for the juveniles. The program is not available for those on less than one year of probation.

Crisis Placement

Currently, there are only 15 crisis beds available in the Third District, which serves Sunland Park. These beds are provided by FYI. The lack of available crisis placements means, that in some cases, juveniles are simply detained instead of receiving proper crisis treatment.

Alternative Educational Services

Educational services are provided depending on the juvenile's needs. The Juvenile Justice Department has the following options available to the juveniles:

- The Academy in Mesilla, New Mexico provides services to juveniles that have behavioral issues. The program is very structured and the juveniles seem to respond well to the specialized curriculum.
- The Stay Program is operated by FYI and provides one-on-one educational services.
- The Mesilla Valley Technical School provides vocational training to juveniles who are preparing themselves for adult living.
- Adult Family Life provides parenting classes for juveniles and their parents.

Detention Center

The Dona Ana Juvenile Detention Facility is located in Las Cruces, New Mexico. There are forty beds for male offenders and ten beds for female offenders. This detention center is also used by the Twelfth District; however the Third District has priority. A major problem at the detention center stems from juveniles being detained for long periods because of a lack of treatment facilities. Educational services for detainees are provided by two full-time Las Cruces Public School teachers and medical assistance is provided by a full-time nurse.

Sunland Park Caseload

Currently there are nineteen juveniles from the Sunland Park area on formal probation, of which thirteen are males and six are females. Over the past six months there have been 20 juvenile referrals from the Sunland Park area. The list is as follows:

Shoplifting	1
Possession of Alcohol	2
Public Affray (fighting)	4
Battery (actual hitting)	2
Assault (attempting to hit)	2
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	3
Possession of Cannabis	5
Criminal Damage	1

The alleged offenses listed above were committed by fifteen juveniles, of which thirteen were males and two were females. They range in ages eleven to seventeen years. Eight of the cases were handled by informal probation, four were handled by formal probation, and three cases are still pending.

CONCLUSION

The current issues that face the city of Sunland Park are many. Clearly, gang prevention and intervention have become both state and local priorities. However, youth gangs do not exist within a vacuum. Gangs develop and flourish within complex and multifaceted social, cultural, political, and environmental contexts. Within the city of Sunland Park, and the region within which this community is situated, challenges to the creation of safe, healthy and nurturing environments exist and in some situations even abound. Following is a brief discussion of some of the more pervasive challenges faced by the city of Sunland Park.

In Sunland Park funding for basic community services and infra-structural improvements pose a most basic challenge to community leaders. According to the Sunland Park Master Plan:

> "The lack of funding to keep libraries open, parks built, and fire and police stations operating are and will be perennial problems. Although the tax revenue will increase with the future development and increased property values, it is imperative that the city does not rely on these funding sources to implement the Master Plan. Close partnerships with developers and property owners, educational institutions, state and federal agencies, will supplement many of the funding gaps that may be encountered. A strong grant writing team must be assembled to seek funding sources so that the Master Plan may be implemented sooner than later." (96)

The police and fire departments in Sunland Park continue to face competition from nearby municipalities in regards to attracting and retaining employees. For example, it costs $2,000 to train a HAZMAT technician and, like fire fighter and EMT technicians, they are under no contract to stay with the Sunland Park Fire Department. A major upcoming challenge will be the addition of fire fighter personnel at Fort Bliss. The beginning pay for fire fighters at Fort Bliss is $45,000 per year and reports indicate that Ft. Bliss Fire Department will double in size in the next two years with the hiring of 150 new fire fighters.

For the Sunland Park Police Department the problems of recruitment and retention are coupled with concerns related to a rise in gang activity. The projected influx of people from the El Paso area to the proposed Western Playland Amusement Park site is a concern for Sunland Park law enforcement and some community members, as well.

Some officers and residents feel there will be a greater risk of gang activity and confrontation between Sunland Park gang members and El Paso gang members. In addition, drug use and drug related crimes are a concern due to the close proximity of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Location in a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, poverty, and limited opportunities for youth or young adults, are all risk factors that increase the likelihood of involvement in gangs. Add to this the high profit potential for drug trade participants within the context of a consumer oriented national culture, and the lure of gang membership coupled with drug trafficking becomes obvious.

Education is another concern for the city of Sunland Park. Mary Carter from the Community Development Department in Sunland Park was able to provide information regarding poverty. She explained that most of the population in Sunland Park has less than a ninth grade education. Many young people do not finish high school. They drop out to look for work. And many that do graduate from high school do not continue on to pursue a college degree. Ms. Carter's observations are corroborated by US Census Bureau data for the year 2000, indicates that approximately 48% of Sunland Park residents have not attended school beyond the ninth grade, while only 20% of the total population age twenty-five and older has a high school diploma or equivalency. Research has shown that higher education levels are positively correlated with higher incomes. Therefore, increasing post-secondary educational opportunities for Sunland Park residents is and will continue to be important.

Sunland Park also faces challenges related to rapid population growth and economic development. Pressures being placed on a limited water supply in combination with environmental contamination in the form of increased air and water pollution could seriously affect the ability of Sunland Park to maintain current growth levels while preserving overall quality of life. As noted earlier in this report, Sunland Park already faces issues related to contamination of soil and water. Furthermore, the expansion of colonias just across the border in Mexico has exacerbated an existing air pollution problem. As Sunland Park, El Paso, and Ciudad Juarez continue to grow, pollution from automobiles and other sources will have the potential for negatively impacting quality of life, especially for those with respiratory problems such as asthma.

Without a doubt Sunland Park is what many would characterize as an economically depressed city that faces numerous and sometimes seemingly insurmountable challenges. However, Sunland Park has a wealth of community strengths that can be marshaled to meet the challenges created by poverty, rapid growth, low wages, and environmental degradation. First, Sunland Park has political leaders who truly care about their community. When Mayor Segura was asked about the relationship of city council members, he spoke of the unity that now surrounds their professional environment. He spoke of the lessons learned from past mistakes and how this city council was able to work together to serve the community. The mayor continued by replying that the city council was more educated, with more members of council having or in the process of obtaining a college degree than ever before. Furthermore, he believes this sets a great example for the youth of Sunland Park.

Recently Mayor Segura developed a community task force that includes representatives from The Child and Family Development Department of Sunland Park, the Sunland Park Police Department, The Sunland Park Library, The City Parks and Recreation Department, entities such as social work programs from both the University of Texas at El Paso and New Mexico State University, and professionals from the juvenile justice system with the City of Las Cruces as well as the State of New Mexico. This task force is designed to identify community challenges related to youth with a special emphasis on gang intervention and prevention. The plan is to rapidly identify what can be done for youth now, while at the same time planning for the future.

In addition to the efforts of the mayor, grassroots community groups of the type that founded La Casita de Anapra continue to work toward positive community change. This is in part due to the extraordinary work ethic of Sunland Park residents. The fact that many established community members in Sunland Park have started with very little makes them believe that with hard work much can be accomplished. During the process of collecting information for this community assessment, UTEP Social Work students regularly remarked that Sunland Park residents, business people, and others were welcoming and grateful that attention was being focused on their community with a goal of creating positive change. Indeed, Sunland Park residents value their community and want to see it become a place that nurtures their youth.

Like the pilgrimage many make up Mount Cristo Rey, Sunland Park residents know that worthwhile change takes time and requires both sacrifice and struggle. The faith in a future for their families that has sustained the members of this community is like the plants of the desert that surrounds them. The environment may at times appear harsh and unforgiving, but when you look closely the beauty is both enduring and unmistakable. Without a doubt Sunland Park will struggle with growth and the enormous challenges ahead. But the spirit of the people who call this corner of New Mexico home will endure. With positive progressive leadership, pride in history and cultural heritage, and a commitment to community, Sunland Park has the potential to be shining example of what can be done when people truly care.

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